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THE TIME TO STRIKE

WHAT do the British and American Governments propose to do about the opening of a Second Front in Europe this year? The news from the Don Valley has given urgency to that question in all our minds. It would be useless to attempt a detailed analysis of the German movements. We do not know what plans Timoshenko may have for a counter-offensive, nor can we make any estimate of the relative losses of both sides. It is enough for us that the Russians do not conceal their anxiety. The Germans have massed a concentration of mechanised forces so terrific that no resistance, however resolute, is likely to stop it for some little time to come. It starts from the key points won last year and it has the better communications at its disposal. How far will its furious impetus carry it? Only a blind optimist would shut his eyes to the possibility that it may push on this summer till it denies to the Russians the use of both Don and Volga valleys. It is our duty to face that prospect before it can be realised. Timoshenko, we may be sure, will do his part, but it is no less incumbent on us to do ours. Here, as we see it, are the consequences which would face us all, if the Germans could achieve what seems to be their aim. They would isolate the Caucasus from the rest of the Soviet Union. Even if they were unable themselves to occupy it securely or to utilise its wells, they would deny to the Russians both its oil and the harvests of a rich grain-growing area. The significance of the Volga is that it is the chief highway for the distribution of this oil. Our allies have other wells, but it is no secret that the loss of the Ukraine has already caused some shortage of food supplies. Oil is the fuel not merely of their tanks and planes, but of their ploughs also. If by autumn they were reduced, let us say, to a third or a half of their normal supplies of oil, the entire strategical picture of this war—our war, not merely theirs—would be transformed. Hitler could then hold the Eastern Front with a much smaller force than it now absorbs. He would have at his disposal, in the air and on land, a formidable striking force which he could use either against this island or in the Middle East. For the rest of the war we and the Americans could rely only on our own resources to cope both with Germans and Japanese. We are far from predicting this outcome for Hitler's second Russian campaign: the armies which drove him back from the outskirts of Moscow may stop him before he reaches the Volga. But the risk is grave enough to present us with an urgent problem.

As often happens in such cases, the chief difficulty is to frame our question. If we could ask the Chiefs of Staff of the three services to draw up a report on a proposal to land on a big scale, say, in Northern France before autumn, we should probably draw from them all a discouraging verdict, so long as they studied it as an isolated operation. The difficulties are certainly formidable. The Germans have fortified the whole coast-line. We should have to use minor ports, fishermen's harbours, even beaches; for the capture of a major port would be a difficult and probably protracted undertaking. That our shipping barely suffices for our present needs we all know. The enemy has a big force available in France of about 25 divisions. Not all of it could be thrown into the battle, for it has garrison duties to perform and our plan might include several feints to distract it. But, undoubtedly, a powerful force could be assembled promptly by road and rail to oppose our invasion. It is clear, even to a modest civilian, that the landing of a sufficiently large force, with no good port at its service, in a severely limited period of time, would be an extremely hazardous operation. A responsible soldier would certainly insist that the balance of forces is such, that we could not act unless American participation were assured. The staff report might go on to point out that next year we shall have at our disposal more ships, better tanks, more planes and a powerful American army which should then be fully trained.

To this there is an answer which even a modest civilian may venture to give. Next year may be too late. Certainly we should be better prepared. But if the Russians should be worsted in the battle for the Don and Volga valleys, we should then have to meet not the second-rate force which is now in France, but the full weight of the best Panzer divisions. If the attempt to invade Europe is ever to be made, the right time for it is this summer while the pressure on Russia is at its greatest. The question is not whether we could hope soon to achieve a certain and spectacular success. It is rather whether we could strike hard enough to disturb the concentration of almost the entire German striking force of armour, planes and shock troops now flung against the Russians. Certainly we should draw off some of the air-force. Again, the troops in France are not permanently stationed there. They rest and refit there and are then sent to the East. If we achieved only these two results—to draw off some of the *Luftwaffe* and retain in France the reserves now there—we should sensibly lessen the terrific pressure which Timoshenko has to withstand. We need not argue that either our army in France or his on the Don would be enabled to score this year any notable success. The purpose of our intervention would be to keep the Russian armies in the field as an effective force capable of future action, as our strength and America's grows. For if Russia's tanks and ploughs could be cut off from the Caucasus oil wells in 1942, there is no possibility that Anglo-American forces could alone achieve victory in 1943.

Facing the question as we have now stated it, is the undertaking so difficult that we must refuse it? For two reasons we have mentioned Northern France rather than any of the distant theatres which might be selected. Shipping is a grave difficulty, but we have to think not in tons but in ton-days. A short crossing, in which small craft could be used repeatedly, would be an immense advantage. Secondly, the operation could succeed only if we had command of the air. This we can ensure over the Channel coast and nowhere else, with our own airfields as our bases. Finally, there are here two peninsulas which lend themselves to amphibian operations. If either the Brest or the Cherbourg peninsula could be occupied the sea would secure both flanks; in either case the land front to be held with home-based air support, while we made good our footing, would be of limited extent. We give these as examples. Clearly there is a large choice of possible places and only the expert can fully weigh the drawbacks and advantages. The possibilities of surprise should not be ruled out, for the Germans have long since ceased to take our threats seriously. The story of the commando raid on St. Nazaire suggests that if we could have thrown in more troops promptly, we could have captured that useful port with comparative ease. That painful incident has, however, another moral. If we do decide to make this attempt, it must be done with a grim determination to hold any territory we occupy as stubbornly as we should defend our own soil. We must not again expose to massacre the inhabitants who rally to us. The worst thing we could do, and the quickest way to lose the war both for Russia and ourselves, would be to make a half-hearted attempt in response to political pressure, under commanders who had no faith in the enterprise. It is also indispensable that there should be a single commander, and he must be a man trained to think in three dimensions.

After weighing the difficulties we affirm that on our will and our capacity to carry out this enterprise the issue of the war may well depend. It means blood, tears and sweat. It will cost many lives. But we have learned nothing if we still hold the belief, which ruined France, that men can keep their freedom by standing passively on the defensive. As little can we hope for victory if we confine our attacks to bombing raids. We are able to bomb German cities to-day with relative immunity, only because the *Luftwaffe* is employed in battering the Russian armies. We hesitate to use once more the familiar argument, valid though it is, that even an attack which fails on its local battlefield may ensure victory to the common cause. By their bold attack at Tannenberg in the autumn of 1914 the Russians saved Paris and enabled the French to win the decisive Battle of the Marne. But that is no model to follow. This enterprise must be undertaken by men who are resolved not to submit even to local or temporary defeat. The gallant spirit Mr. Churchill awakened for the defence of our own shores must now be summoned to attack. We have roused the expectations of our Russian allies by the vague but hopeful promise we gave Mr. Molotov. If we stand motionless while they are driven back from Don to Volga, we must reckon with the bitterness that will corrode their minds, as they look back on their devastated homes and count the acknowledged casualties, which totalled four and a half millions before the present offensive began. But the decisive argument for us is not the psychological case, important though that is. If Russia were to be neutralised for effective future action by this summer's campaign, we doubt whether any army which Britain and America could raise would ever suffice to liberate the vast Eurasian continent from the Germans and the Japanese. The time to strike is now. The only proviso is that the blow can be made with sufficient force to give effective aid to the Russians by diverting German forces from the Eastern front.

The Enemy Concentrates

Both the major Axis Powers are following this summer a strategy of concentration. The Germans are throwing all their resources into the attack on Russia, and it is unlikely that they will turn aside into any secondary enterprise, save in Egypt. Japan, in the same way, while she consolidates her gains in Burma, Malaya, the Dutch Islands and the Philippines, is concentrating her attack upon China. Her immediate purpose may be to make sure of her perpendicular, internal lines of communication from Peking to Canton. These, after her heavy losses at sea, in the battles of Midway Island and Coral Straits, are more than ever vital to her. There is not much we can do for China, save to lend her bombers: over this there should be no further delay. It is possible and even probable that Japan will not this year attack either India, Australia or Siberia. The German offensive in Russia goes ahead with alarming speed. The Russians are still, as we write, defending Voronezh, but the Germans are here in strength on the wrong side of the Don. The southern thrust, in two prongs, past Boguchar and Millezovsk is moving with distressing rapidity, and the Russians are here retiring before a heavily superior force. Their stand will be along the lower Don, which is a prepared and also a natural obstacle. In Egypt nothing is yet happening on a large scale, but the R.A.F. is still using its ascendancy well, and an advance has been made along the coast five miles past El Alamein, which ended to the satisfaction doubtless of both parties, for two thousand Italians exchanged the perils of the desert for the safety of a prison camp.

India Plays Politics

Mr. Gandhi has got his way and after long delays the working committee of Congress had adopted a modified version of his resolution, which summons "the British power" to withdraw from India under a threat of civil disobedience. The confusions and contradictions that prevail in the Congress camp on this subject defy analysis. Dr. Azad, the President, says that if we were to withdraw, India would adopt conscription and carry on the war. Mr. Gandhi, on the other hand, says that the Indian army would be disbanded, while the British army would be kindly permitted to stay. We are assured that this is not an ultimatum, nor is it designed to impede our war effort. What is it then? Little more, we suspect, than a verbal gesture, a move in internal politics, designed to preserve the prestige of an ageing leader. It is so irresponsible that the wise course is to ignore it. We doubt if any of the Indian leaders intend to start any form of civil disobedience that would hamper resistance to Japan. What the leaders hope is probably that we will relieve them of their embarrassments by putting them in prison. That would be an unpardonable blunder. Mr. Jinnah meanwhile talks with at least equal frivolity, incapable of seeing anything bigger on the world-wide horizon than his feud with Congress.

Relief for Europe

The usual arguments are not valid against the present proposals to organise food relief to certain German-occupied countries. It is urged, of course, that most of these countries are self-supporting, or even food-exporting in peacetime, as France and Jugoslavia are; that their shortage is due to Nazi looting; and that if the United Nations sent in food, the Germans would simply cart it away. Even this view does not cover Norway, Belgium, above all Greece, which always depended on import to feed their people. The argument for sending in food under International Red Cross auspices is that the people are dying of hunger. Apart from other considerations, starving people do not resist oppression. Nine hundred starvation deaths a day in Greece: children fainting in school in Belgium from weakness, thirty per cent. increase in child mortality in occupied France; a fourth of the food necessary for life for Poles; a sixth for Polish Jews. This has been a drought summer, harvests will be bad all over Europe. Famine and pestilence will wipe out whole districts this winter. Should we not offer to send in vitamins for children, and condensed milk for babies and pregnant and nursing mothers? They would scarcely tempt the Germans and they might stave off the deficiency diseases for a part of the people at least.

Building Programme

Only a couple of months ago, the building industry was in process of being reduced to a "garrison"—that is, to a labour force just large enough to keep things going on the assumption that the main programme of wartime construction was at an end. But now orders have been revised, and the builders have been told to stand by for a large new effort. The Americans are coming, and this country is to become more than ever a vast military camp. In this new phase of war construction, we shall be building, in all probability, very few factories; for more and more of the business of armament production is being carried on overseas. There will be some more building of hostels and married quarters near the big factories which are situated badly for access; and there will, one supposes, be much work on new aerodromes and military camps. At the same time, factories producing ordinary consumer goods will be further concentrated; every inch of available space is needed for storage and for other war purposes.

Small Shops

The retailers' protests against the new plan for reducing their number increase in volume. A good many of them are unacceptable, being really pleas for allowing the number of shops to remain pretty much as it is. That, however, is out of the question. It is a plain fact that the number of persons engaged in distribution ought to be reduced; what is needed is a way of doing this that will give rise to as little hardship and injustice as possible. The retailers are quite right in saying that the amount of compensation offered to the shopkeeper who voluntarily closes down under the new scheme is very small—though even a little is better than the nothing at all meted out to retailers who have been squeezed out already. The associations of small shopkeepers are also right in saying that the scheme as it stands is clearly conceived in the interests of the rent-receivers and the big stores. A large chunk of the proposed compensation will go in rents which impoverished shopkeepers would otherwise be unable to pay; and the bigger shops will stand an excellent chance of consolidating their positions at the expense of the smaller. The trade unions, as well as the associations of big storekeepers, will probably like this; for the big shops pay better wages and grant better conditions than the small ones, whose employees are moreover almost entirely unorganised. The trade unions seldom have any affection for the small firm, which is difficult to unionise and, even if the employees are permitted to join a union, gives a great deal of trouble and cost to the union for a very small return. This is one powerful reason which drives the big firms and the unions into a sort of uneasy half-partnership, and sometimes makes the union seem to be on the side of capitalist monopoly. It is also a reason for the strength of anti-Labour feeling in the small-shopkeeping class, which is, of course, also the leading antagonist of the co-operative movement. Incidentally, the co-operative movement itself stands quite powerfully in the way of concentration in the distributive trades; for how can a mutual trading store be merged, even temporarily, with a profit-making concern?

Sir Daniel Hall

The title of "public servant" sometimes means just what it says, and never more truly than when it was used of Sir Daniel Hall, who died last week at the age of seventy-eight. From 1902 on, when he became director of Rothamstead, he worked for the Government. Earlier he had founded the Wye Agricultural College. He was quite impervious to political pressure; for instance, no official policy would persuade him to support the beet subsidy. The application of science to farming was his vocation; the master-interest which produced standard works on fertilisers, crop and stock feeding, soil chemistry. It was that practical side which caused him to advocate the nationalisation of British land tenure, in his last book *Reconstruction of the Land*, and articles in this journal. But the artist and the man of letters were joined in him with the scientist. The eye which dwelt on the wild tulip and Chinese celadons found their expression in the lucid delightful prose of books like *A Pilgrimage of British Farming*, which worthily companions Cobbett on the shelf. He was for ever making something: in his retirement at Long Sutton he was breeding new fruit. Big, ruddy, with a deep north-country voice, he looked far more the farmer than the student; and the eager, friendly simplicity with which he would explain his work to a scientific ignoramus had in it not only the truth of science, but the kindliness of the soil whose growing things he loved.

SHIPPING

VE can see no case for demanding that the Government should aid the Nazis by publishing he details of shipping losses or discussing hem in open session. In any case, the uestion of publicity is of secondary importance. We know that shipping losses, especially in American waters, have been very large; we now, too, that they are only one part of the eneral question of the relation of shipping to he strategy of the war. Closely linked are military decisions of supreme importance, questions of the organisation and proper use of the hipyards, and problems of siege economics, n which turn, during these fateful weeks, the ossibility of using to the best possible advantage he shipping space available to us.

The first problem—highly technical—is whether larger proportion of bombing aeroplanes ought o be used in defence of shipping. Crudely put, the organisation of large raids on Germany, whether on targets like Cologne or on submarine uilding yards at Danzig and Flensburg, the best se to which our bombers can be put or should large proportion of bombers be used in the efence of shipping? This is a technical question: he House of Commons can do no more than nsist that it be settled on its merits and not reated as an interdepartmental squabble.

Turn to the shipyards. This month the *Merchant Navy Journal*, organ of the Navigators' nd Engineering Officers' Union, has some sharp uestions to put, summed up in the query, a triking one considering its source, "Are we uilding ships of a design solely governed by war equirements, or are considerations of post-war rofit-earning capacity unduly governing the onnage and speed of ships ordered? . . . The Merchant Navy . . . demands an assurance that othing but war requirements govern the design f such ships. . . . If any, by lack of vision y prejudice, by stupidity or slackness—be they tatesmen, Government officials, technicians, manual workers or vested interests—fail us in his such will be guilty of a crime against the men and women of the nations of the world rraigned against the enemies of freedom."

The *Merchant Navy Journal* heavily underlines oints made in this journal a couple of weeks ago. "Commercial pundits," it remarks, "in their doubtful wisdom, caused many shipbuilding berths deliberately to be put out of use after the ast war. . . . We understand that the purchasers of these destroyed shipyards were placed under a legal obligation to prevent their use n our time as shipyards; if this is so, have such mbargoes been lifted? Is it true that experienced naval architects and engineers have designed apid methods of ship construction of the type now used in the United States, and that their plans have been constantly rejected by the Director of Merchant Shipbuilding?" This mouthpiece of the Merchant Navy officers ightly relates this situation immediately to the problem of the Second Front, soberly asking that hose responsible for carrying out our obligation o open it "should not be forced to work upon small margin."

There is also evidence of impatience among hipyard workers regarding the organisation of he work in the shipbuilding and repair yards. Many weeks ago there was held in Manchester n important national conference, called by the Shop Stewards' National Council, of representatives of the shipbuilding and repair workers from very yard in the country except two. Proposals for improved organisation and, above all, for ime-saving—many of them along lines which have received official and semi-official recognition n the engineering industry—were put forward. The speed of events—or the speed of Hitler, if you prefer it—has redoubled the urgency of these proposals and suggestions; they are now high on the list of necessities to ensure the successful maintenance of the Second Front. How far are they being carried out? How quickly are the Admiralty, the employers, and the Unions getting to work on this? It took months of tussle to establish even the present organisation of Production Committees, for example, in the engineering industry. There are no more months to play about with now.

We come to the problem of shipping space. And this, certainly, is a touchstone for the vigour, speed and sincerity of our organisation of the Second Front. Bluntly, there is reason to suspect that some Members of the Government fear the public reaction to a further drastic cut in rationed and other goods for the purpose of making more space available for the needs of the Second Front. There would certainly be such a reaction among some sections of the public, who would not readily understand that to tighten the belt now may be the best, indeed the only, way of winning the war within a reasonable time. It is here that full publicity, both on the gravity of the shipping position and the urgency of a decisive blow in Western Europe, can be of value. Even under present conditions we do not believe that the Government has any ground for nervousness about the effect of new cuts, introduced for the purpose of speeding effective military action, upon the public morale. The real danger to morale is rather the disillusion and anger among the workers if the idea gets abroad that an attempt is being made to keep the public happy, to "take its mind off the war," by maintaining present standards, at the expense of doing all that is possible to keep the promise of the speedy preparation for a Second Front.

In the days when our High Strategy was geared to a war lasting many years, with offensive action by ourselves and the Americans out of the question until 1943, there was perhaps a justification for postponing as long as possible any further strain upon public physique and public nerves. Those days seem now to us to be past. We are committed to offensive action in Western Europe at the earliest possible moment. Our shipping policy has to be consonant with that pressing commitment.

VANSITTARTISM

DEAR LORD VANSITTART,—Not many weeks ago I was asked if I would act as your opponent in a public debate which I was told you yourself were ready to undertake in Oxford. I was aware that this was a formidable task, but I consented. I have since heard that for some reason not known to me you have called off the challenge. I am sorry about this. I consented to the debate because I have become convinced that there is in this controversy a considerable element of misunderstanding, and that it would be in the public interest to clear it up. I feel this the more since reading your article in the May issue of the *Nineteenth Century*. You have replied there to some of your critics. You say—and I could not agree with you more—that "at a moment like this we should be above calculated misrepresentation." I add that if possible we should be above misrepresentation of every sort.

We met once during the Spanish War. I expect you have forgotten it. I am revealing no secret if I recall that you expressed surprise to find that my views were so close to your own. In fact, on the immediate issue of international affairs we were in agreement. Watching the trend of Chamberlain policy, we both felt outraged that another generation of the young men of Europe were almost certain to be sent to destruction. We shared a common detestation of everything for which German militarism stood. For these reasons I write now in the hope that you will believe in the sincerity of my remarks as I assume sincerity in yours. I am but reiterating a sentiment of your own when I say that I have no other axe to grind except the universal axe of human welfare which we grind together.

I want first to clear away one delusion. You constantly speak of yourself as a "professional" and of your critics as amateurs or sentimentalists. I assure you that at least one group of writers who have read and attacked your *Black Record* includes some who know the German language and German people with as much intimacy as you, and as for German history, if I may judge from your writing, they have studied it with much more attention. Moreover, you are dealing here not with a problem of professional diplomacy, but one of sociology. As to any understanding of historical development and of social affairs, you seem to some of us, whose professional job this is, as innocent as a child. You cannot even see any connection between Hitler and economic misery; you speak as if, apart from the butcher bird, Europe was a place of a "hundred thousand happinesses." Some of us after the last war decided to devote our lives to studying the causes of war and trying to prevent the next. We have failed in so far that never for a moment has power been in our hands. The executive power throughout these wasted years has been in the hands of the professional diplomats and politicians. You and your friends must bear the chief responsibility for throwing away the hopes of our generation and the opportunity of a century. But that does not mean that we have made no progress in our field of research. The history you produced in *Black Record* was from a professional point of view quite scandalous. In your *Nineteenth Century* article you speak as if you had been misrepresented. To us it feels that the boot is on the other foot. You have spread throughout the whole reading public a number of flagrant misstatements which we have exposed and which can be checked by anyone who cares to look them up in a textbook. You have made no apologies for using your standing and professional reputation to back these errors; you have not corrected them or replied seriously to your critics. I have discussed a few of these mistakes and written a brief reply to your thesis in my little book entitled *Propaganda's Harvest*. Much of the same case has also been made by others in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. You have not deigned to reply.

Instead, in your article in the *Nineteenth Century* you have repeated various criticisms and left them unrefuted, as if to repeat them were to show their absurdity. You say, for instance, that the NEW STATESMAN "sought to father on me the myth that 'from remote antiquity most Germans always were Nazis' and proceeds to affirm that this invention is uniting Germans in a solid bloc under Hitler." Now, in fact, we have made both assertions and both of them are fully justified. As for the first half of the criticism I quote from the blurb on the back of your *Black Record*, which is an accurate enough summary of what you say and which must, I presume, have been passed as accurate by yourself. The passage reads as follows:

> These talks are designed to show that the German has not really altered since Tacitus's day. He has always been the barbarian, the war power, the enemy—furtive or avowed—of humanitarianism, liberalism and Christian civilisation, and the Hitler regime is no accidental phenomenon but the logical fruit of German history, the German *in excelsis*.

This seems plain enough. There are any number of passages in your writings which justify this account of your views. Demonstrably it is your thesis, and I do not know why in the *Nineteenth Century* you apparently wish to go back on it. The basis of your thesis is surely that the Germans always were Nazis. Do you now deny that this is true or are you denying that you have said it?

As for the second part of our statement that the effect of your work must be further to unite the Germans, I can quote many examples from internal German propaganda to show that you are, in fact, of very considerable value to Dr. Goebbels. The actual passage which we quoted was from a broadcast by Hans Fritzsche, who endeavoured to stiffen German morale by assuring the German people that it was not merely a journal like *John Bull* that wanted to destroy Germany, but Robert Vansittart, of the Foreign Office. I could add other quotations. It is no reply to say that you have endured a good deal of "bantam ebullience" from the NEW STATESMAN. This is, in fact, how the Nazis use your writing and everyone I know who follows the course of political warfare between this country and Germany, will confirm me in saying that the effect of your work has been to provide just the type of evidence which the Nazis require to prove to the tired German citizen that the decency of the Atlantic Charter is a pretence and that the real mind of the Foreign Office is destruction—which is the natural deduction from the butcher-bird thesis of Lord Vansittart.

In the same article in the *Nineteenth Century* you make a number of other complaints against your critics: in particular you say that they have fastened on you a racial view which you do not hold. I have no desire to misrepresent you. I agree that you have not anywhere supported your view of the German people with the pseudo-science that now disgraces the remnant of what was the proud tradition of German scholarship. But the distinction is formal rather than real. You say that the Germans have always been barbarians, always been more cruel and more aggressive from the time of Tacitus to the present day; that they are butcher-birds preying on the rest. Hitler says that the Jews have always been more predatory, more treacherous, more loathsome than any other people. The effect of both statements is about the same. Frequently reiterated, this type of doctrine can only have the effect of segregating a particular group of the human race, declaring that they are a nation of outlaws which must be differently treated from any other people. The question is whether the effort permanently to make pariahs of the German people is or is not a way of keeping peace in the world.

In your *Nineteenth Century* article you declare that all you are demanding is the re-education of the Germans. This is a mild statement that no one will dispute. It seems to me very inadequate: how far is this generation of Nazis capable of re-education? If you are indeed convinced that the "root of the trouble" is the character of the Germans why do you not advocate their extermination? You run away from logic in your *Nineteenth Century* article. Being a practical and civilised man you are disgusted at your own conclusions and get angry with those who draw the inferences from your words that you have never clearly thought out. You say that we have accused you of wishing to seal up the German coal mines. According to reports of your recent speech before the Never Again Association, you did, in fact, suggest that German heavy industry should be destroyed, and I have no idea why you regard this as an unfair accusation. Do you not propose this? If such destruction would in fact prevent the Third World War, I should be the first to advocate it. You speak of the NEW STATESMAN'S "solicitude for German heavy industry." You must know that so far from feeling such solicitude, it is the thesis of this paper that the origin of German militarism, which has been the most explosive and destructive force in European history for the last 75 years, has been the expansionist pressure of German capitalism based on the power of its heavy industry. Here you are touching one of the true origins of the trouble. I agree that our main problem is to prevent the use of this heavy industry for war in the future.

Now at last we have reached the real problem. Have you forgotten that during the last war British capitalists solemnly swore never to trade again with the Germans, and that after the last war the French tried the experiment of occupying the Ruhr and taking the profits of German heavy industry for themselves? Why did they not succeed? For the quite simple reason that the structure of Western capitalism is interdependent. No sooner had Germany been ruined by the war and the peace that followed it, than British and American business men again wanted their markets and were prepared to put money into Germany in order to obtain them. Foreign money and German money are inextricably intertwined in the capitalist structure of Western Europe, and the attempt to ruin one meant ruin to the other. Moreover, the heavy industry of Germany happens to lie in German territory amongst German people; it is the livelihood of German workers and also one of the bases of Europe's standard of life. You cannot permanently seal up or destroy the mines and heavy industry without permanently impoverishing not only Germans, but Europe and the world. Do you think that after the first passions of war have subsided any of us—in particular the capitalists of Britain and America—will be any more ready to see the great sources of wealth sealed up than they were to keep Germany permanently starving after the last war? Do you think that Europe would settle down to a life in which the British and the Russians and the Americans use all the other natural resources of the world, while they somehow manage to keep the resources of Europe out of use? You know this is nonsense. What, then, do you mean? If I say it's nonsense, you complain that I am tender to German heavy industries: in the same article you complain that you are accused of this intention as if it were indeed unworthy of you. Perhaps you will explain whether this is your proposition or not, so that your actual proposal may be examined on these merits.

May I suggest that the only sensible method of tackling this problem is to insist that the resources, which have so far been used primarily for the wealth and power of a few industrialists, shall be taken out of their hands and developed for the general advantage of Europe and the world? I do not mind how drastic this process is. "Nazi" to my way of thinking includes the German capitalists who have financed and supported the Hitler gang. They all need liquidating. I have no tenderness for German industrialists. Surely in your desire to avoid calculated misrepresentation you ought not to confuse the NEW STATESMAN'S tenderness for the resources by which the mass of European people live and a non-existent tenderness for the industrialists who have abused those resources and profited by them. So little tender to these interests are we that we are prepared to see the private ownership of heavy industry brought to an end everywhere.

One further point. I have tried to explain in my *Propaganda's Harvest*, and also in the NEW STATESMAN, that my complaint about Vansittartism is that it prevents serious thought about the most difficult of all subjects. No one could more agree with you than I about the barbarity and horror of German militarism and about the necessity of abolishing it. But I know that German militarism is an extreme form of a common disease, and that if people in this country are convinced, as many have been convinced by you, that the way to obtain peace is merely somehow or other to do something terrific to the Germans, they will be misled this time as they were last time. The other day I heard of a lady who had been completely convinced by your *Black Record*, but whose convictions were shattered at a single blow by being merely reminded that the last two efforts to conquer Europe before those of the Germans happened to be carried out by French forces under Louis XIV and Napoleon. So emotional and unstable is the effect produced by such unhistorical propaganda. In fact this business of aggression is a human problem, not a peculiarly German phenomenon, just as it was primarily a Spanish and British phenomenon in the sixteenth century—Alva in the Netherlands was the very counterpart of the Nazis in Norway—and a French phenomenon in the period of Louis XIV to Napoleon. I could quote you passages from your professional predecessors suggesting that aggression was peculiarly Russian. To-day more obviously you have to consider the case of Japan whose atrocities happen to be as bad in our day as those of the Germans and whose history includes no period of liberal tradition comparable with that of Germany. Japan has not always been aggressive or uncultured, but if they get their way to-day they will organise all the coloured peoples of the world for an onslaught on the white races. Their military record is more treacherous and as full of cruelty as the German. Can you not see, as you consider this example, how you are misleading your generation, and how, instead of making war less likely, which is, I well know, your object, you are in fact merely confusing the minds of those who wish seriously to organise for peace?

I believe you to be entirely sincere in your efforts to rouse people to the danger of Germany, and to prevent sentimentalists from misleading us about the difficulties of peace-making. But the results of such propaganda as yours in the last war should surely be some warning. Northcliffe and Bottomley—especially Bottomley—said just the things that you say now and were eagerly read by millions who accepted for the moment the simple picture of German wickedness as the origin of war. Soon they discovered their error: the soldiers who came back from the front and who occupied the Rhineland after the war were the first to tell their friends that they found Germans rather like themselves. Meanwhile your professional friends took to appeasing Germany and you took a hand with them in breaking down the rather feeble barrier against war that was the one clear gain of Versailles. Why did all the edifice of hate break down so quickly? Because it is not a possible basis on which to found Europe. It was your well-to-do friends who cried out most violently, as they do to-day, that Germany must be for ever crushed, that no one must ever be allowed to trade again with Germans (that was the Big Business demand of 1917), and that we must never again "feed Hun babies,"—it was these Vansittartites of twenty-five years ago who quickly wanted to rebuild Germany as a market, a field of investment, a bulwark against Bolshevism and finally, under Mr. Chamberlain, as an ally in the competitive struggle with the United States. Let us agree not to let that happen again. It is because I believe that to be the inevitable result of the type of unscientific thinking and false history displayed in *Black Record* that I deplore it and have attacked it. It leads away from sensible thinking. We shall need to be very tough this time. Tough with Germans and others. Europe will run with Nazi blood if the German war machine is broken, whatever doctrine anyone preaches. That is inevitable after the horrors committed in Poland, Czechoslovakia and other countries. But it is the job of professional people, trained to take a responsible attitude in such matters, to look beyond these emotional horrors, to leave off talking about being lenient or vengeful to Germans and to get down to the real problem of European and world peace—which is as difficult a problem as any ever tackled in history. The problem of Germany is included in the greater problem of the breakdown of a civilisation through its own inner conflicts. That needs all our attention.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

A LONDON DIARY

THERE are persistent rumours that Lord Beaverbrook is to rejoin the Cabinet. It is true, I believe, that Mr. Churchill recently offered him the post of Minister of Defence. It is also likely that several of the most influential and vigorous members of the Cabinet would find it extremely difficult to work in a team with Lord Beaverbrook. A Press Association report states, obviously on the most direct authority, that he is not certainly at present taking office in this Government. I doubt if anyone favours Lord Beaverbrook's return to the Government except Mr. Churchill himself, who, I well believe, finds Lord Beaverbrook a good companion. Labour and the 1922 Committee agree in distrusting Lord Beaverbrook. The Tory Party has never liked the

ADVERTISED GOODS.—The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

CENSORSHIP REGULATIONS allow readers to post this paper to any part of the British Empire (excepting Eire and Northern Ireland) and to any country of the American Continent (excepting dependencies of enemy-occupied countries) but readers are advised to consult a Post Office or a newsagent before attempting to post elsewhere.

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oprietor of the *Daily Express*, and to-day they istrust the general election policy that has recently en run in its columns, and they have recently und reason to regard a good deal of the publicity bout tank production under Lord Beaverbrook, hen he was Minister of Production, as mainly allyhoo. Lord Beaverbrook's strong cards are s popularity in Russia and his advocacy of a cond front from the beginning of the German-ussian war. But I do not think that even those ho are happy to arrange big public meetings for im are at all confident that he is the person to rganise the project he sponsors, or to lead the ation in a desperate enterprise.

* * *

Here are two incidents I heard of during the eek from which I leave readers to draw their own orals. At a large patriotic demonstration ranged in a Midland town, a man was observed king photographs. The police, acting in accord-nce with regulations, took him in charge and onfiscated his camera. When the films were eveloped, they were found to be wholly innocu-us; but it turned out that the man himself was Communist, so instead of letting him go, the olice reported the matter to the local M.O.I. fficial. They had, they said, discovered a Com-unist taking photographs. The local M.O.I. an replied, very properly, that he failed to e what bearing the man's political opinions had pon the issue, whereupon the photographer was llowed to go. The second incident concerned woman I have known for years. She is a Com-unist who recently took up work in a local unitions factory. Soon after the factory manager eceived a visit from the police. "Do you know," e was asked, "that you have somebody working n your factory who is very pro-Russian and has een to Russia several times?" "Well, what bout it?" said the manager. "Oh, nothing, xcept that I thought you ought to know."

I said I would leave readers to draw their own orals. For myself I reflect that habit dies hard; reflect, too, that official admiration for Soviet Russia affects in no way official fear of Com-unism; indeed, it increases fear of Com-unism as a faith which can resist Nazis. Thirdly, Communism or no Communism, the persistance of this obsession at the present time illustrates the gulf that separates the nation's needs and hopes rom the preoccupations of the State machine.

* * *

What decent reason can the Government ossibly have for maintaining the ban on the *Daily Worker*, while permitting the *Socialist Appeal* to carry on? It goes much further than the *Daily Worker* ever did in 1940. It even campaigns in the coalfields, calling upon young miners to strike. Mr. Joseph Hall, President of the Yorkshire Miners' Association, has declared that men "are getting £10 a week to distribute subversive literature among young miners." Certainly a strike in the coalfields would be worth all of that to the enemy at this moment, and the situation in the mines remains sufficiently tense to encourage enemy belief that such a campaign is worth while undertaking. The *Socialist Appeal* is the organ of the Trotskyist "Fourth International" and decorates its pages with pictures of Trotsky, appeals to workers not to co-operate in Production Committees to raise war production and constantly attacks the Soviet Union. As things stand, the Communists, and all those in the factories who are campaigning for increased production, have to fight these disruptionists with one hand behind their backs.

* * *

The deficiencies of our tanks and guns in North Africa have rightly raised a storm of discussion around the whole problem of design, and produced innumerable suggestions as to how we can make rapid improvements without loss in quantity production. As a valuable contribution to understanding of the position in the war factories, I strongly recommend a little book by Mr. Jack Owen, just published by Lawrence and Wishart under the title *War in the Workshops*. As an engineering worker of long and wide experience, who is still working in a big armament factory, Mr. Owen can claim the authority of one who is accustomed to see the basic weaknesses at very close quarters. It is startling to find that in his view the output of tools for the manufacture of many types of munitions could be increased by no less than 25 per cent. "solely by the use of common sense in defining the tolerances set on this work." He illustrates from his own experience the contention that the habitual setting of over-fine limits—instructing engineers to work to one-thousandth of an inch when ten-thousandths of an inch would do very well—is a principal factor in slowing down production. "The chief weapon of the industrial Quisling," he writes, "is the system of tolerances. . . . I have seen a job, a metal pipe to carry petrol from the tank—which had to be machined at one end to a limit of two-thousandths of an inch, and yet all that fitted on to this end was a rubber continuation pipe!" This sounds to me a tall story, but it illustrates the sound point that to get fine limits on particular designs either justified or altered is a task for shop production committees.

* * *

I read with surprise that John Jagger was nearly seventy years old. In a way it makes his accidental death rather less sad. It means that the best of his life was over; I thought of him as a man of not much more than fifty. There are few politicians we could so little spare. He remained in office, as in Opposition, the same direct and genuine person, free from the vanity that is the occupational disease of politicians and as clear about the causes he was supposed to represent as if he had never seen the inside of the Home Office. Herbert Morrison did a good job in appointing him as Parliamentary Private Secretary to look after the refugee and libertarian side of his work at the same time that he appointed Ellen Wilkinson to supervise shelter improvements. I remember a talk with Jagger about the scandals of refugee internment soon after his appointment. He remarked that the Home Office was so well established in its routine, so old and set a bureaucracy that he did not know whether he would have any real chance to do anything. All he could promise was that if I sent him the allegations of injustice that came to me he would have them investigated and send me a reply. Ever since then we have carried on a correspondence, and I have never known him fail. Sometimes he could do nothing: sometimes there was nothing to do. Often he could tell me that on inquiry he found that this or that alleviation could be made, or he would reassure the unhappy wife of a friendly refugee whom British folly had sent to Canada or Australia or kept in confinement here that her husband was to be released and sent home. If Jagger had only been a kind and lovable man I should have thought little of it. There are lots of kind people about. He was also a very loyal and sensible and shrewd, and he cared about doing the job rather than about getting the credit for doing it—which is an uncommon quality in public life.

* * *

I am glad to know that J. L. Hammond's seventieth birthday is not to pass unnoticed. He belongs to the select band of great men whose work greatly influences a generation which remains in the mass ignorant of the source of its ideas. I recall the immense excitement with which, as a student just after the last war, I learnt from the books of Mr. and Mrs. Hammond what the industrial revolution looked like not from the point of view of the conquerors, but from the experience of the men and women who so rarely secure the right to be articulate in history. These books of the Hammonds profoundly affected all the post-war generation of university students. Those of us who are lucky enough to have known Hammond in the flesh have discovered in him a friend, infinitely disinterested, always magnanimous, especially to the young, a man whose enthusiasm for every generous cause has been one of the inspirations of the journalism as well as of the history of our time. How define the influence of Hammond and the other men who created the great tradition of the *Nation* and the *Manchester Guardian*—for which Hammond is still working?

* * *

The Gold Coast has appointed two West Africans as Assistant District Commissioners. This marks the first breach in the tradition that African peoples will accept the rule of a white man. but not that of an African of another tribe, who, moreover, has not the authority of a tribal chief. Given suitable training there is no reason why an African should not pass through the senior administration like any white man—and he has the advantages of living in his own climate, and, surely, of understanding his people better. The two new officials are certainly well enough educated. Adu, the older, read science at Cambridge and travelled Europe extensively with the Student Christian Movement; Busia, the younger, read Modern Greats at Oxford, and has been a member of Miss Perham's research team at Nuffield. Both are products of Achimota, that remarkable college which gives the Gold Coast a start over other British territories in educating Africans up to University standard.

* * *

From Troy onwards war has stimulated the myth-making imagination. Here is a specimen which I venture to borrow from that very readable new monthly *Scope*. Lord Beaverbrook on a visit of inspection to an aircraft factory was shown the plans of a new bomber. When would it be ready? In two months. The hustler gave orders that it must be completed within forty-eight hours, in time for the next raid on Berlin. At the cost of upsetting all the work of the plant, the thing was done and the new bomber reached Berlin on time. When the bomb-aimer pulled the stick, out fell two members of the night-shift. CRITIC.

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to C. J. Friedlander.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Lost, Saturday, 1.30. Blue Cami-Knickers, marked Etam. Sentimental value. 10s. reward. Please return.—Advt. in the *Star* (Sheffield evening paper).

People sharing with Siamese cat modernised 18th century Devon house, seek others for pacifist life, 15s. weekly each, inclusive.—Personal column of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

In another part of the depot the Princess [Royal] saw the girls vacuum-cleaning the brilliant peace-time uniforms of the British Army, including busbies and bearskins.—*Manchester Guardian.*

Young girl or older woman wanted for Pekingese; live with family, good home; keen, early riser, cheerful companion.—Advertisement from *Our Dogs.*

Oui, oui, savez-vous que Hitler does not interfere with La Coquille Restaurant.—Advt. in *The Times.*

When a detective called at the house of a retired naval officer to inquire about alleged breach of food regulations, the officer's wife said to him: "We are not nobodies. We are gentry, and during this war the gentry have had to put up with a lot of rudeness. You have no right to do this to us." —*Daily Mirror.*

BATTLE SCHOOL

[The following account of the training at a battle-school is written by an officer who has just completed a course. The "hate" stuff against which Mr. Joad and others protested, was officially banned by the Commander-in-Chief. In his covering letter the author of this article writes that neither "spit and polish" nor this hate propaganda, which actually had little or no effect on the men, are satisfactory methods of training. The real alternative to both these expedients is battle drill, which imposes its own innate discipline and which is, in the author's view, the right preparation for invasion and the solution for problems of any unemployment and browning-off. —ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE Mess is a pleasant house in its own grounds in an East Anglian village; the drive is dusty, the gardens rank and retarded with the spring drought; but there are clusters of daffodils everywhere under the trees, and a cuckoo calling as clear as the sunny evening, away to the left.

Forty officers and forty sergeants, eight young instructor officers—subalterns made up to temporary captains for the course—the C.O. and the Adjutant, all waiting for the General to arrive with his inaugural talk. We have put aside collar and tie, tartan kilts and trews, Sam Brownes and swagger canes; thank God for a rough shirt under denim overalls; maybe we're getting down to something.

But the General only says war is a game, like football; teamwork, footwork, skill, speed, co-operation; no long orders and arguments during play; only bad football teams gabble and shout. Then he says war is deadly serious; the Boche is out to kill us, and we are out to kill him. Certain pacifist and anti-military elements in the press don't realise this; perhaps they don't love their country as intensely as we do. The Boche is a nuisance; we must teach him for once and all; the only good Hun is a dead one. We are here to learn how to make good Huns.

Half an hour later we are crawling along a drain with Bren guns pumping live rounds at any part we expose. Several chaps get their haversacks holed. The General does the crawl also, and gets as dirty as ourselves. This is described on the syllabus as Battle Inoculation. In the afternoon we do Hate (1). Divided into sub-sections we stalk each other in the scrub. Instructors fire live over our heads and yell their slogans at us. Remember Hong-Kong. Remember Singapore. Get him before he gets you. It might be your sister. Bang. Rat-tat-tat. Woomph. Guts. Guts. On. On. On. Sweat saves blood. Kill. Kill. The little yellow bastard's after you. Get him before he gets you. Remember Hong-Kong. . . . It's damned hot crawling on your belly and you wish they'd stop shouting. Wouldn't it be better to forget Hong-Kong? You see your enemy, red in the face, pulling a gorse needle out of his hand; that's him, the bloke with horn-rims. Get him. You leap, grapple, roll, make a stab with your clenched fist. O.K. George. You win. Remember Sing-Sing.

Back in the Mess we get Hate (2). Lecture by Capt. Brownlow, a boy of superabundant energy who stammers, has a face like a question mark, is naïve and enthusiastic, turns somersaults during lulls in training, and is likeable and friendly.

"Hate, gentlemen. A few words about Hate. This afternoon, we've got to learn to hate. We've got some films for you. Hate films. And a Hate Room, though there's nothing in it yet. One thing about Hate, when you're putting it across to your men, don't bring the Bible into it. It won't work, gentlemen. I've tried it. Any problems? About Hate? That's all, then. Off you go. Double. Double. Go on. Double." He is so relieved to finish his lecture that he jumps up and down like a small boy. We double off to the next parade. The wags are already shouting "Remember King-Kong" and "It isn't my sister because I haven't got one."

For the rest of the month there is hardly any Hate; the course is too strenuous and exciting to indulge in emotionalism; in any case, there is a mental process at work in us all, considering, selecting, rejecting, sometimes openly, in discussions at table or pub or exercise, more often quietly, reflectively, unbeknown; we have rejected Hate.

This same selective apparatus takes a week to register a communal conviction that Battle Schools are carrying out a revolution in minor infantry tactics. A new simplicity, a new realism and directness. We do the drill on an open field first, falling in smartly in sections in the order of advance. We number off, each man shouts his place and job and weapons. *Advance, line of my arm, two section leading. Move.* Every man knew what was happening. Drill has demonstrated the elements of tactics. The principles are clear. Action. Immediate fire from the front. Fire from flank and rear. Get in before he thinks you're there. Consolidate swiftly, ready to exploit. Similarly with village fighting or wood clearing or river crossing. You feel ten times more powerful. . . .

The river wanders away into a wilderness of pillboxes, scaffolding and wire; even the river can't find a way to the sea. A lonely house in this wilderness, built by a solitary, it seems; now used by the Battle School for house fighting. We go in singly, clearing each room. The rooms are dark and blood-soaked. the paper hanging off the wall. Blood drips down the stairs. Kick the door open, tommy gun held against your stomach, finger taking first pressure on the trigger. Silence. Jump in through the dangerous doorway. Press your back against the wall in the dark corner. A dummy figure bobs up on a wire. Tommy gun barks instinctively. There is another door, leading into a dark passage. A figure runs down the passage. You get him in the back. As you follow up you slip on animal's entrails,

Outside again you hand the gun over to the next chap. "What's it like?" "All right," you say.

Strolling back through the town the gentleness of the place falls round you. The street with projecting gables and timbered fronts, all so quiet and tranquil, everyone gone away from the town except the soldiers. Yet your mind is just now an evil house, dark-roomed, blood-soaked, defiled, and you wish you could be properly sick, instead of having this yellow curdled taste at the root of your tongue.

It's as near the real thing as you can go in this unreal trauma that has drugged England's pastoral army in the two years since Dunkirk. Running till you drop, wading to the waist in black ditches, swimming rivers without wetting your rifle, fired at by men who are not too particular, your mind grows as tranquil and sensible as your body grows ecstatically exhausted. Your senses become extraordinarily perceptive. You smell the gorse you are lying in, the marsh gases you stir up, the flags and mallows and thyme, the acrid whiff of cordite. Lying on your back after a three-mile flanking run you feel like a window of blue sky and your hands lie contentedly among the stinging nettles. Lovely white blisters they make, flushing the skin round them.

As for the slogans, they have touched you as little as commercial ads. on hoardings. They are old gags, you see them a mile off; and because the mind is as complex as life, it just hasn't any use for clichés. "Hate" by itself means less than "Love thy neighbour as thyself." Even the General seems to have been given a tip, for in his closing address he says, "As for blood and 'ate, I think you'd better forget it." Good enough, sir. There's quite enough to remember as it is.

And to what does one return? To blanco parades and prancing R.S.M.s? To dinner tables in requisitioned hotels on the promenade, watching the M.T. boats roaring into the channel at dusk and a white millrace in their wake, while somebody says what the hell are the waiters doing with the soup? It depends on your luck. Maybe you'll get a break; India perhaps, or Norway, or France. There are plenty of places even if there isn't plenty of time. Get him before he gets you—that's what they said at the Battle School.

"FRIENDS OF GREEN CONSTRUCTION" IN MOSCOW

I was the only trained woman gardener in Russia when I went to live in Moscow in December, 1933. Hardly had I settled down to work at the Academy of Communal Economy—a research academy combining practice and theory, and housed in an ornate, dreary old building in Kuznetsky Most, five minutes from the Kremlin—when I was discovered by a member of the "Friends of Green Construction" and invited to give a paper to the Moscow Branch of this voluntary association of garden-lovers. This particular "friend" occupied a room in the building where I lived. I have forgotten his occupation, although I must have known it, since the first question exchanged between two Muscovites in my time was, "And what is your work (or speciality), Comrade?" But I do remember that he had no obvious connection with gardens or gardening; that he had never possessed so much as a window-box, and saw little prospect of doing so. Being new to Russian life when he approached me, I was faintly irritated at his insistence on the subject he proposed for my paper—"The History and Aims of the English Royal Horticultural Society." To my mind, I had at least a dozen subjects at my fingertips for such a meeting without the trouble involved in getting precise information from our London Society. However, like many other Soviet citizens, he knew what he wanted and got it. And the size of the audience he assembled certainly justified his choice of subject.

On an intensely cold night in February, when the completeness of the winter scene reduced gardens to imaginative pinpoints, I faced about a hundred and fifty people all bent on learning as much as they could about our ancient and royal society. It was my first experience of enthusiastic Russians in the mass, but I had an excellent interpreter and a lot of fine information supplied by Colonel Durham, the Secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society, so I went into the fray lightheartedly. The chairman, who was also the President of the Association, was a handsome old man, ruddy, solid and cheerful. He spoke to me in French and immediately made me feel at home and as enthusiastic as the audience. I gathered that he was Comrade Smidovitch. I spoke for an hour or more and then the questions came in full spate. The subject was turned inside out, and I found myself considering our Society in all kinds of new ways. One characteristic bit of cross-examination dealt with the financial aspect of the R.H.S. They wanted to know, for certain, that it paid its way! We were to indulge in no Utopian dreams about greenery in Moscow.

I was thankful when, at eleven o'clock, big uncovered sandwiches and glasses of tea appeared. Comrade Smidovitch introduced me to his wife, the lovely old lady I had seen in the front row. I had never heard of this couple, but their combination of culture, friendliness and simplicity was impressive. Afterwards, I learnt that they had both been in exile with Lenin for many years, and were among the oldest members of the Bolshevik Party. I found references to them in Krupskaya's *Life of Lenin* and in the official *History of the Civil War*. During the next four years I met other eminent Bolsheviks, and I found always the same qualities of quiet poise and extraordinarily well-digested knowledge, which became for me the hallmark of a good, experienced Bolshevik. I never saw the Smidovitches again. She died within a short time, and he followed quickly. People said it would have been difficult to imagine them apart. "The Friends of Green Construction" was their child. She told me that during their exile in Switzerland they had fallen in love with the alpine flowers and green meadows, and had resolved to encourage a love of gardening and growing things when they were able to return to

Russia. Now the time had come to bring these dreams to life, and didn't I think the Association fine? Those two old people, both over seventy at that time, were giving their scanty leisure and energy—not to making a show garden for themselves or for the Moscow Soviet—but to helping ordinary people to organise and educate themselves for the making and appreciation of gardens. That was, and is, the Bolshevik way of doing things, as it is understood in Russia.

The night finished with my being thanked with true Russian good manners and the nomination of a small number to see me home across the quiet Red Square with the pine trees along the Kremlin walls etched in frosty silver.

Cold morning light and my semi-public wash in the kitchen sink, which resembled half a biggish tin hat glued to the wall, brought me back to earth, but I reminded myself that the meeting was a fact as well as the enraging difficulties of daily life.

As time went on, I saw a good deal of the "Friends of Green Construction" as they worked closely with the horticultural trading trust—known as the Green Trust, for which I did consultative work. This Trust undertook everything from the planning and making of huge parks of culture and rest to the organisation of street-sellers of early flowers from the Caucasus, and the supply of india-rubber plants for parlours. The last item gives some idea of the amount of education which I, as a carefully trained intellectual as well as gardener, considered needed doing. The anti-aspidistra fight in England had been as nothing compared with this struggle. Lectures to the "friends" on the dreariness of these dusty plants were useless, and the example of one's own india-rubber-plantless ivory tower fell flat. As a matter of fact, I found that as times improved and the Green Trust was able to supply large quantities of potted primulas, cyclamen, geraniums, etc., people quite naturally bought these, discarded the rubber plants, and educated themselves at the same time. I tried to wage a similar fight against the prevalent and much-admired carpet-bedding, which produced, in the summer, huge portraits of Lenin and Stalin in coloured foliage, as well as innumerable hammers, sickles, and five-pointed Red Army stars. The portraits proved a godsend to some types of tourists, especially English ones; the first glimpse of them produced a comfortable, superior feeling which made up, to some extent, for the irritation born of a glut of admiration. But I often wished that these same people had the job of explaining to the Muscovites exactly why Stalin in flowers was silly. Fortunately for my point of view, carpet-bedding is costly in money and labour, and in spite of traditional and ineradicable Russian lavishness, these practical considerations made the substitution of other forms of gardening practice easier. I was also able to establish the exchange of rare Siberian plants for English herbaceous flower seeds with which the Green Trust established nurseries, and in this way we developed possibilities of new forms of gardening theory and practice.

These and many other problems were discussed backwards and forwards in the Association, and I had ample opportunity of appreciating the benefits that accrue from such a voluntary, widespread, serious and enthusiastic body of ordinary people. But the Association set itself a more important task than the fixing of standards of taste, namely, the education of the people in the careful and appreciative use of the parks and gardens. Many Russians told me how impressed they had been in London by the behaviour of the people in our parks, and by the fact that the grass could be walked and sat upon. These were the standards the Russians had set themselves, and no gloomy talk of mine about our litter hogs was able to lower us in their eyes.

When Comrade Kagonovitch, one of the best-known and ablest of the Bolshevik leaders, was given direct charge of the ten-year plan for the reconstruction of Moscow, his slogan, "Moscow must become the greenest and cleanest city in the world," became our rallying cry, and was proudly printed on the covers of the Association membership cards. As for the professional gardeners, we felt that, at last, we were in the front ranks of useful workers. May the "Friends of Green Construction" flourish again soon in a Moscow as peaceful and happy as the one I have been describing.

DOREEN BROCKHOUSE

PARIS UNDERGROUND

LONDONERS in exile may long for a glimpse of Piccadilly, but to the Parisian, as he hurries down the Tube steps, comes a sudden homesickness for the old-fashioned Paris Metro. The streamlined, tubular corridors of the London underground, its well-groomed, brightly lit walls, its mile-long escalators and air-conditioned vaults—fade before his eyes as he remembers the familiar wrought-iron "Metro" entrance in pure *style art nouveau*, the swing doors, the gloomy booking hall, the square-cut passages and the clanging of those pointless turnstiles—if such diminutive and unnecessary obstacles can be called turnstiles. Further on, at the station itself, is *la controlleuse* in her sentry box, superbly indifferent to the impatience of the queue whose way to the standing train has been barred by the closing of yet another "Barrière"; and, on the platform, the tall chocolat Menier machines, the park benches with their little plaques "Alliez Frères," the gay posters advertising "Picon," "le bouillon Kub," "Dubonnet," the pre-1914 train with its red and green coaches emerging from the safely lit tunnel, and above all the unmistakable, haunting smell of the Metro, where "gros bleu," cosmetics and garlic mingle in their own peculiar richness.

To-day Paris is a far-away city, and news of the life of its people scanty; yet the stories that filter through reveal that the Metro, perhaps alone of Paris institutions, is still a mirror of the character and aspirations of Parisians. The streets and the boulevards up above are empty, save for the cars of the Nazi authorities and their collaborating toadies. The Parisians have no means of transport except the Metro. But down there, underground, packed like sardines, the French are at last alone among their fellow-countrymen. Part of the jostling crowd, they can once more feel themselves a force. There is safety and strength in numbers. And so a strange and inspiring saga of "Metro Legends" have sprung up. Legends? Their starting point must be authentic enough as the same story with different variations is received from a great number of sources.

There are the lighthearted, school-boy jokes. Rush hour-trains packed—someone in the crowd pins a notice "I'm de Gaulle" on the back of a German officer. Then there are the tickets strewn on the carriage floors all torn in the shape of a V or an H [Heure H = Zero Hour]. This practice has lately been stopped by the issue of weekly seasons. Or the tales of "passive resistance"—of the German officer jumping up to offer his seat to a very old French lady, who with unseeing eyes stares straight ahead, feigning to ignore him. Conscious that the whole compartment is aware of what is happening, he orders her to sit down, but she continues to look through him as if he were not there, and at the next station the officer gets out hurriedly.

There are other significant echoes: "In peacetime everyone travelled with their faces buried in a newspaper; now one sees few papers but many books. The titles of the books are interesting too—many translations from the English, and masterpieces from our own literature."

Recently the Germans have banned the playing of swing tunes in occupied France. The reason for this can be seen in the following extract from the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, March 22nd, 1942. . . .

> You may be asked in Paris: "Are you swing"? This word has a special meaning. Originally a dance term, this unfortunate word is now used to describe that hopeless section of the French people who persist in their loyalty to Great Britain and the United States. It is impossible not to recognise in this an extremely dangerous tendency among the younger generation—and the more and more open adoption of a certain fashionable line of thought, which the French call "One-way patriotism." For them it is patriotic to scorn everything which is German and above all everything connected with the New Order in Europe. The defeat of France is dismissed as a passing stroke of bad luck, which in any case will be put right by the eclipse of the present victors.
>
> These youths are to be seen every day in the Paris Metro. Sporting soft hats and flaming ties, talking nonsense at the top of their voices, and peppering their remarks with English swear-words such as Damn! or Hell and Damnation! when it would have been just as easy to use a French word, but of course that would be French and not "swing."

The Germans may try to dismiss resistance as a youthful and fashionable craze. There is more to it than that. The blood-red posters on the hoardings along the boulevards are announcing not some new Loterie Nationale, but the death of still more hostages, shot as reprisals by the Germans. And once more the Metro is the stage set for these heroic deeds:

> A few days ago a German was knifed in the Metro, by a workman, at the Bastille station. Everyone who was in the train or on the platform was arrested.
>
> Some of the prisoners afterwards got permission to be visited by their families. During the visit they all seemed confident and thought they would soon be set free.
>
> The following day they were all shot.

But Paris, underground, carries on.

MARGUERITE DASNIÈRES

THE ECONOMIC DETERMINATION OF JANE AUSTEN

CLIO, we all know, thanks to Marx and his disciples, is economically determined. But the lady is so old and her character so terribly complex that the details of her economic determination are by no means easy to disentangle. Jane Austen, poor lady, is, I suggest, a better subject for the third degree of Marxian dialectic. If there is truth in the Marxian doctrine, every novelist must bear on mind and imagination the imprint of the economic system in which he lived; and, since in the novel he gives us a picture of society as he saw it, and often an implied criticism of it, we ought to be able to see very clearly in that mirror how economics determined both his mind and his environment. If you look into the mirror of Miss Austen's six great novels, that is in fact what you do see, and the reflection is to me, at any rate, a little surprising.

Jane Austen lived in the transition period between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but she belonged much more to the eighteenth than to the nineteenth. Three of her novels were written before 1800 and the other three between 1812 and 1816. When she died in 1817, the new age of living, thinking, and writing, had hardly begun, and she at any rate had not been touched by it. One can see this, not only in her language and style, but in the books she had read. Her poets were Shakespeare, Pope, Gray, Thompson, Cowper, and Crabbe; her novelists Fanny Burney, Mrs. Radcliffe, Miss Edgeworth, Lewis, Fielding, and Richardson. The nineteenth century was just about to break into literature with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, but she never felt the breath of the wind before the storm. There is no evidence that she read even *Lyrical Ballads*, which was published when she was 23, and the most "modern" books she read were Scott's poems, *Waverley* and *The Antiquary*, and the very early poems of Byron.

Her father was a country clergyman, and she lived all her life in the country. The class to which she belonged was the lesser country gentry, but her family was rising socially. Her paternal grandfather was a surgeon and a surgeon was

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Money into battle

First one front, and then another, leaps into activity and a spotlight is thrown on tanks, ships and aeroplanes in turn . . . . On one vital front the battle rages ceaselessly—The *Financial* Front

It is now three months since the last Warship Week was held in England and Wales.

I desire to thank most warmly all those who contributed to the success of these Weeks by investing in Savings Bonds, National War Bonds and other Government securities.

But I would urge that investment should not be confined to special Weeks. The need is continuous, and urgent.

1942 is witnessing an immense quickening in the pace of the war and in the rising tide of battle. This must be matched by an intensified effort on the financial front.

I appeal, therefore, to all Directors and Financial Executives, whether in large or small concerns, as well as to private investors, to give consideration again now, and constantly, to the need for systematic investment.

Money invested in war loans on tap is the outward and visible sign, for friends and foes alike, of our determination to keep our financial front sound and unbreakable. It is a direct contribution to victory and to post-war stability.

Survey resources now! Invest *now!*

PRESIDENT,
National Savings Committee

barely a gentleman ; her father and her maternal grandfather were both clergymen, and therefore just within the charmed circle. In her own generation the family climbed well away from the surgeon. It became clergymen and admirals, won titles, and married the children of baronets and even, in one case, the granddaughter of a duke.

Jane Austen's social and psychological environment was therefore that of the eighteenth century country gentleman. The industrial revolution and nineteenth century capitalism had not impinged upon it or upon her, and not a breath from them ruffles the surface of her novels. Whatever determined her economically was not the Victorian type of capitalism which left such clear marks on the novels of Dickens and Thackeray. That is why I find it surprising that her social and economic standards should be, except in one important particular, those which we associate with a capitalist bourgeoisie rather than with country gentlemen and aristocrats. Charlotte Brontë, the daughter of another country clergyman, was born a year before, and her sister Emily a year after, Jane Austen died ; *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* were published in 1847 and *Villette* in 1853 ; but, if I did not know the dates, I should have said that it was Jane rather than Charlotte and Emily whom capitalism had economically determined.

I will begin, however, with the exception referred to above. Jane's attitude to "work" is the antithesis of that of a capitalist, and pre-eminently of the Victorian, bourgeoisie. There is hardly a single male character in her novels who does any work ; to work at all is, indeed, almost incompatible with the status of a gentleman. She recognises as socially possible only the following professions : the army and navy, the Church, and, with some reservations, the law. Of these professions only the army and navy are usually considered to be unobjectionable. Even so, it will be remembered, Anne Elliot was prevented by her family from marrying Captain Wentworth, because her father "thought it a very degrading alliance." "The profession," says Sir Walter Elliot, "has its utility, but I should be sorry to see any friend of mine belonging to it" ; and his reasons are two, the profession is offensive, "first, as being the means of bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction," and second, because sailors "are all knocked about and exposed to every climate, and every weather, till they are not fit to be seen." "A man," he sums up, "is in greater danger in the navy of being insulted by the rise of one whose father, his father might have disdained to speak to, and of becoming prematurely an object of disgust himself, than in any other line." In applying the Marxian dialectic to Jane Austen, one must, of course, always remember that she is one of the greatest and subtlest of satirists, and the remark of Sir Walter Elliot, of Kellynch Hall, must not be treated quite as seriously as "facts" are dealt with—sometimes perhaps with equally small reason—by Marxists. But if Jane's smile hovers over Sir Walter, Lady Russell, who is represented as an unusually sensible woman, supported him in preventing the match, and the mature Anne, who had lived to regret having been persuaded by Lady Russell, still admitted her prudence.

As a profession, the navy is regarded by Jane Austen and her characters almost exclusively as a means to obtaining either a position or money. No other profession receives any consideration but the Church and the law. She knew that a gentleman might be a lawyer, but she hardly takes the profession seriously. It enters the novels, I think, three times. Mr. John Knightley was undoubtedly regarded as a gentleman and he was also undoubtedly a lawyer ; he is the only major character of whom it is recorded that he "worked" in the Victorian sense, and he and his elder brother actually discussed legal questions, practically the only example in the novels of "serious" male conversation. Mrs. Bennet's father "had been an attorney in Meryton," and her sister, Mrs. Phillips, had married her father's clerk, and these facts, no doubt, were intended to account in part for the incorrigible vulgarity of the two sisters. Their brother had settled in London "in a respectable line of trade" ; Mr. Gardiner in *Pride and Prejudice* and Mr. Weston in *Emma* are the only representatives of "trade" who are admitted to respectable society, and it is clear that Jane herself, as well as the Netherfield ladies, "had difficulty in believing that a man who lived by trade, and within view of his own warehouses, could have been so well-bred and agreeable" as Mr. Gardiner.

The only other reference to the law is a little surprising. Miss Crawford tries to persuade Edmund to become a lawyer rather than a clergyman, but I think that this is really intended to be an example of Miss Crawford's distressing pertness and levity. For there is no doubt that in the social and economic hierarchy of the novels the parson is normally considered to be well above the lawyer. The Church was, however, not a profession, nor did the parson work, in the nineteenth century sense. Out of six heroes three are clergymen or prospective clergymen. But none of them seem to *work* as clergymen. Henry Tilney presumably occasionally preached a sermon when he happened not to be dancing in Bath, but unless one had been told so explicitly, there is nothing in the novel which could lead one to know that he is in Holy Orders. *Northanger Abbey* was written in the eighteenth century, before the Evangelical Movement had touched Jane Austen. It had certainly touched her when she wrote *Mansfield Park* 14 years later, but even Edmund regards his future profession almost entirely from its social and economic position, and one feels that Miss Crawford is nearer the truth than he when she says : "A clergyman has nothing to do but to be slovenly and selfish—read the newspaper, watch the weather, and quarrel with his wife. His curate does all the work, and the business of his own life is to dine."

This attitude towards "work," professions, and trade is, I suppose, characteristic of a landed aristocracy or gentry. Otherwise the economic determination of Jane Austen is of the type which one usually associates with a capitalistic bourgeoisie. The social standards are almost entirely those of money and snobbery. It is remarkable to what an extent the plots and characters are dominated by questions of money. The whole opening of *Sense and Sensibility* turns upon the finance of the Dashwood will and the avarice of Mrs. John Dashwood, whose income is £10,000. The finances of the Bennet family and the entail in *Pride and Prejudice* have an equal importance. The axis of the plot in every novel except *Emma* is money and marriage or rank and marriage. The social standard, ideal, and duty of a woman is assumed to be to marry as high or as rich as possible, and we know, on Mrs. Bennet's evidence, that, according to the tariff, £10,000 a year was as good as a lord. Sir Thomas Bertram, a man of the highest morality, considers Fanny's refusal of the rich Crawford positively immoral, and it is immoral because Fanny is poor and Crawford rich. Edmund, one of her most priggish and also, it is to be feared, one of her favourite heroes, takes much the same view as his father. It is true that Jane Austen herself was too sensitive to approve a system which reduced personal relations to a question of pounds, shillings and pence. The sale of Maria for Mr. Rushworth's £12,000 a year in *Mansfield Park* is the antistrophe to Fanny's refusal of Crawford—her plots are always carefully based upon a strophe-antistrophe theme—and leads to disaster. Elizabeth in *Pride and Prejudice* is really shocked by her friend Charlotte's acceptance of Mr. Collins for purely mercenary reasons, but there is no doubt that Charlotte Lucas accurately defines the ordinary economic standards of Jane's environment: "Without thinking highly either of men or matrimony, marriage had always been her object; it was the only honourable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune, and however uncertain of giving happiness, must be their pleasantest preservative from want." The corollary of this attitude of the lady and her relations to the wealth of a prospective husband is the attitude of the man and his relations to a poor bride. It is just as shocking for a rich man to marry a poor girl as for a poor girl to refuse a rich husband. General Tilney is the classic example of the outraged father when he turns Catherine neck and crop out of Northanger Abbey as soon as he finds that he was mistaken with regard to the size of the dowry. It is assumed in *Sense and Sensibility* that Mrs. Smith will disinherit Willoughby and Mrs. Ferrars Edward if they do not marry wealth, and when it comes out that Edward is engaged to Lucy, his mother and sister are so ill that the doctor has to be summoned. Lucy's guilt is, of course, double, for she is not only poor, but lower class. For the only social standard in the novels which competes with money is snobbery. It is true that this snobbery is a favourite subject of Jane Austen's satire, but Lady Catherine de Bourgh and Sir Walter Elliot are only ridiculous in being exaggerated. All the characters are fundamentally snobs with regard to class, and their snobbery is the same as that of the Victorian bourgeoisie. Every one of the novels ends happily and the end is happy in four out of the six because the heroine, in spite of difficulties, marries above herself. Emma, it is true, does not marry above herself, but she is the most snobbish of all the heroines. She can tell Harriet that she (Emma) could not have visited her (Harriet) if she had married the yeoman, Robert Martin—" you would have thrown yourself out of all good society." And the reason she gives illuminates the class consciousness of Jane Austen's environment :

> The yeomanry are precisely the order of people with whom I feel I can have nothing to do. A degree or two lower, and a creditable appearance might interest me ; I might hope to be useful to their families in some way or other. But a farmer can need none of my help, and is, therefore, in one sense, as much above my notice, as in every other he is below it.

It sounds like the Charity Organisation Society in the eighteen-nineties. LEONARD WOOLF

Bring out your dead
PAPER

SALMAGANDHI

INDIA faces annihilation,
Gandhi speaks of the common cause,
Gandhi vetoes co-operation,
Worse will come if the Raj withdraws.
India seethes in the painful pause,
Delhi stiffens and Congress leans,
Gandhi offers an explanation—
Nobody knows what Gandhi means.

Who is losing the war, who winning,
British India knows not, nor heeds,
The bonds are snapped and the end beginning,
India follows where Gandhi leads.
Azad argues and Nehru pleads,
The Axis dangles a glittering bait—
Waiting for light sits Gandhi spinning,
Spinning the thread of India's fate.

Gulfs are yawning and parties splitting,
Councillors reason and Liberals plan ;
Wherever the Moslem League is sitting
Clear is the word of the Mussulman.
Peace at the price of Pakistan
Or the final blow at the Raj is dealt,
All compromise with the Hindu hitting—
Hitting below the Moslem belt.

Plain is the Government condition,
Plain is the meaning of Ambedkar,
Plain is the interim proposition
Of Rajagopalachariar ;
Clear speak the Princes in Durbar,
Clear is the angle of Subhas Bhose,
Clear were the terms of the British Mission—
Gandhi's meaning nobody knows.

India must suffer armed protection,
Britain must go by polite request,
Troops must be shunned like the plague infection,
By the highest caste and the most depressed ;
Hamstrung Britain must do her best
With the wheels slowed down and the land unploughed—
Mahatma Gandhi gives direction,
Spinning the thread for India's shroud.

SAGITTARIUS

TWO GALLERIES

There was, as we know, a little girl who, " when she was good was very, very good, and when she was not was horrid." Matthew Smith, who is showing an important collection of thirty pictures at the Lefèvre, is never horrid ; but sometimes his work is very good and sometimes it is nothing, or next to nothing. The explanation of this striking inequality is to be found, I think, in his manner. He is apt to render his vision in a few broad patches of paint, connected by easy transitions ; and consequently it is apt to be a matter of hit or miss with the result. His pictures remind me in this way of certain cubist constructions—at the moment I am thinking of Léger—which, when balance, proportion and harmony were exactly right, when the equation came out true, had the fine sonority of a well-cast bell and the stability of fine architecture ; but, when the equation went wrong were so much waste canvas and paint. A picture by Matthew Smith, if it fails as a whole, is unlikely—such is the nature of his art—to captivate by partial charms. Rarely will you say of one of his failures what you say so often about pictures that do not quite come off : that it is full of delightful passages and exquisite details. Here there are few compensatory pleasures to arrest a disappointed eye ; though sometimes, as in Nos. 13, 17, 25 there is paint to be relished and in *The Green Chemise* (No. 2) subtle modelling. But, generally speaking, here is art which stands or falls by sheer rightness of design and appropriateness of colour. And when it does stand how fine and satisfying it is. Look at *L'Après-Midi* or *Dulcie* (an early work) or *Reverie* or *Resting* or the big nude (No. 25) ; look, indeed, at everything, and look long and carefully, for this is no exhibition to be glanced at and judged.

At the Redfern Gallery are works by John Tunnard and William Roberts. Tunnard is, I think, the best of our " abstract painters " (the phrase though imprecise is too useful to be abandoned). He is generally allowed to be a pleasing colourist ; in fact he draws well enough to render modelling by contour—the test of good drawing. Also he has succeeded in creating a world in which his abstractions—forms and colours—move and meet easily and inevitably. Thus his room at the Redfern is a positive pleasure to visit. The art of William Roberts is what the French call " *honorable* "—*très honorable.* CLIVE BELL

A CO-OPERATIVE THEATRE

Nothing could be much further from the ideals of the co-operative commonwealth than the theatrical world as we know it to-day, but a group of actors are endeavouring to establish a co-operative theatre in the West End on the lines of what the Director, Mr. Alec Clunes, calls " amateur socialism." This is being done at the Arts Theatre Club in Great Newport Street, a theatre with a seating capacity of only 350.

Half the money taken at each performance is allocated to production expenses, and the other half to the actors and the rest of the staff, including those

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COLOMBO
CALCUTTA
ELLERMAN'S
CITY & HALL
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Tower Building, Liverpool.
Woodbank Hotel, Balloch, Dumbartonshire

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COOLTIPT
the cigarette* with the natural filter—cotton wool—which absorbs all the dust as well as the heat and nicotine.
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Admission by payment of inclusive fees from £125 per annum, or if unable to pay total cost, by the votes of Subscribers (a definite small number) with part-payment towards maintenance.
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Full information from the Secretary, Mr. H. S. STEPHENS, at the Institution.

'Too good to waste a single crumb'
Bread is a munition of war and HOVIS, with its added wheat-germ, is a whole armoury of nutrition in helping to keep the nation fit. So make the most of HOVIS and use up crusts and 'left-overs'.
Best Bakers Bake it.
HŌVIS
for HEALTH & VIGOUR
Macclesfield

employed on technical and executive work. The actors, whether they are stars or less well-known, are paid a flat wage, and it is interesting to note that established artists are keen to come on this basis. The management take the risk that the amount written off for expenses will cover these and it has been found that to date they have averaged out on the performances given. The company that runs the Theatre is distinct from the Club. It is legally constituted as a non-profit-making concern.

The only economic basis on which to establish such a co-operative effort is to run one play for a month, and to do this the Theatre Club needs 6,000 members. In seven weeks they have gained a good proportion of these, but very many more members are required if the Arts is to achieve success. Each play needs a month for preparation. This was the case with the production of *Awake and Sing,* with which the Club broke all records. Up to this time no play ever produced at the Arts has run for more than two weeks, but Clifford Odets's drama lasted five weeks and now it seems likely that it will be transferred with the entire cast to a West-End theatre.

The aim of the management is to offer intelligent entertainment and to make the Arts Theatre a recognised centre for lovers of the drama. They hope more and more to make it an actors' group. Nor are the actors British only. The Arts Theatre has looked for talent among refugee actors and has engaged other foreign artists whose names are already well-known in this country.

New plays are welcomed, and there will be some interesting revivals. The idea is to create a repertory on Continental lines, which means that they will run good plays for a season and when they have achieved success will introduce them into the programme for one night each week. The programme before Christmas will include *The Constant Couple,* a comedy by Farquahar, which should attract those whose appetite has already been whetted by recent productions of *The Country Wife,* and *The House of Regrets* by Peter Ustinov. The Club has a Theatre Brains Trust and concerts and poetry readings will be held regularly. The other club facilities include a restaurant and snack bar.

ELEANOR ROBERTSON

THE GIELGUD "MACBETH"

In London we are hungry for Shakespeare; moreover Mr. John Gielgud is an actor conspicuous for his intelligence. Why then, is it impossible for some of us to contemplate his *Macbeth* without dismay? Evidently he is not temperamentally well suited to playing a character in which there is as much of Henry V as of Richard II, but his accomplishment goes far to overcome this obstacle, and his assumption of robustness, if not altogether convincing, makes a brave show. What we complain of is the gratuitous and deliberate distortion of Shakespeare's verse. Mr. Gielgud has recoiled from the old parrot-like declamation into a vice no less calamitous. He seeks continually to give the impression of spontaneity, as if he were thinking what to say, instead of having learnt his lines by heart. The result is the destruction of the verse: long pauses are made indefatigably in the most inappropriate places. And when the passage is specially famous, for instance, "To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow"—the actor, in an apparent anxiety to be original at any cost, neglects every beat of the poet's rhythm. One is reminded of conductors who obtrude their own "interpretations" of Beethoven by neglecting all the composer's directions, playing the slow passages fast, the *forte* passages *piano,* and indulging in extravagant *crescendos.* Moreover, Mr. Gielgud, whose voice is a magnificent organ, treats it like a Wurlitzer, pulling out different stops on every other word. These ornamentations vulgarise the harmony just as the pauses and syncopations wreck the melody. There is hardly a line in which the rise and fall of the verse are preserved, and never a passage in which an attempt is not made to improve upon Shakespeare's incomparably varied versification. Mr. Gielgud can, we know, speak blank verse very finely; but often in this production one seemed to be listening to a cruel skit in a revue upon his mannerisms.

Miss ffrangçon-Davies has the fragile stature that Mrs. Siddons enviously thought was desirable for a Lady Macbeth. She also attains a viperine intensity. But from the eighth row of the stalls she was often inaudible. "Infirm of pus" we heard, "*Give* me the daggers." (And should not the accent fall on "me"?) Her sleep-walking scene was bizarre, dimly surrealist and altogether lacking in grandeur. It was punctuated by loud snores, which we supposed at first came from a fortunate member of the audience; but—incredible as it seems—these issued from the mouth of Lady Macbeth. She had a fine gesture, however, when she bared her arms to the shoulder in taking the daggers. And both she and Mr. Gielgud were at their best after the Banquet scene, when they collapsed into a lethargy consequent upon insomnia and nervous strain. The best-performed scene, however, was Act IV Scene 3, between Macduff (Mr. Francis Lister), Ross (Mr. Abraham Sofaer) and Malcolm (Mr. Emrys Jones). Mr. Leon Quartermaine was made too dainty a Banquo—perhaps to emphasise Macbeth's vigour. Charles Maunsell was excellent as Macduff's son. The decor suggested the influence of Arthur Rackham, the Edwardian illustrator, but Dr. William Walton's music would obviously be most effective if one could properly hear it.

ROGER MARVELL

THE MOVIES

"Mrs. Miniver," at the Empire

"Green-eyed Woman," at the Plaza

Most American films about England, especially England at war, have a blithe inaccuracy that soars at times into fantasy. The Blitz becomes Guy Fawkes night, dancers at a night club stand up to the strains of "Land of Hope and Glory," Cabinet Ministers sit down to lunches rushed from Soho to tables on the pavement in Whitehall. I must admit that I find this surrealism agreeable rather than otherwise. *Mrs. Miniver* has few such attractions of dottiness; it sets out to be as English as can be, and up to a point succeeds. Yes, this *is* what the weekly shopping day in London was like as the peace guttered out in 1939, here *are* the flutters in first-class carriages going home, the England we are fighting for at the other end—the lady of the manor, swans on the lake, sweet singing in the choir, a station-master almost as sweet, rivalries over the local flower-show, the impeccability of the upper middle class. All this has been translated from an artfully cosy column in the *Times* to the screen without any great loss of credibility; and there has certainly been a gain in the surprising choice of Miss Greer Garson as Mrs. Miniver. Her performance is charming, though years too young for the part. Nor is the mingling of a fragrant pre-war world with the horror of the Blitz so calamitous as one might imagine. There are affecting moments when the little boats go out to Dunkirk, when bombers roar over the family dug-out, when even the flower-show must be broken up. But the most that *Mrs. Miniver* achieves is an easy pathos; sentimentality (and class sentimentality at that) takes on a tone of holiness, of smug simplicity, which personally I found it rather difficult to bear. "This is a people's war," says the vicar delivering a sermon in his bombed church; but it isn't, it is only (look round at the faces, look back over the story!) the best people's war. In fact, *Mrs. Miniver* seemed to me for the most part as remote as old drawings in *Punch*; but that it is successful in its genre I don't for a moment deny. No reluctance here about being shame-making; the *vox humana* is the obvious stop, and out it comes! An English company with equally sentimental material would have made a dreadful mess of it, and the fact that Miss Jan Struther, the author of *Mrs. Miniver,* saw the Blitz from America probably also accounts for the grace with which her heroine weathers the war, in a world of unshakeable old-fashioned devotions.

I much preferred the cooler pre-war fictions of *Green-Eyed Woman.* Business deals and second marriages, jealousies, high salaries, love scenes and hate scenes fresh off the ice—this is a film Hollywood serves up every two months, war or no war. *Green-Eyed*

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Correspondence

INTERNATIONAL AIR CONTROL

SIR,—Lord Brabazon's letter expresses the views he has held for so many years and reinforces the lessons imposed upon us by the experiences of this war. His knowledge of aviation is unrivalled and consequently his proposals cannot lightly be dismissed.

During the transitional period immediately following the war, described by Mr. Sumner Welles as the prelude to "that permanent system of general security promised in the Atlantic Charter," the preliminary measures for the reconstruction of the world will have to be undertaken by the United States, the Soviet Union, China and the British Commonwealth.

Lord Brabazon suggests "that flying in all its branches is to be controlled and vested in an International Board." In order to secure the closest collaboration during the short term period it will be necessary to constitute a Confederate Council composed at the outset of representatives of the four great Powers who have borne the burden and heat of the day. This Council could then appoint the International Aviation Board suggested by Lord Brabazon, composed of representatives of all the United Nations. Its membership should be confined to scientists, technicians and organisers—it should not be a political body. Its functions might include the following :—

(*a*) To promote and develop civil aviation.

(*b*) To submit a plan for the organisation of an International Air Police Force.

(*c*) To prepare a code of rules and regulations governing civil and military aviation.

(*d*) To exercise the duties of inspection, general supervision and control of aircraft factories. This could be achieved through a system of licensing which would be applied to all States. As a result no new factory or assembly installation could be built unless it was authorised by a licence from the Board. The existence of an International Air Police Force would ensure that the licensing system was effective and, if necessary, could be enforced.

(*e*) To register and licence all civil aviation companies. No company or corporation would be allowed to operate without a licence from the Board.

(*f*) To inspect, control and licence all aerodromes and airports. Aerodromes allocated to the International Air Police should be extra-territorial and placed under the control of the Air Chief Constable and the International Police Commissioners.

(*g*) To appoint an Aviation Research Council which will include representatives of all the United Nations.

No doubt there are other functions which might also be entrusted to the Board which would report periodically to the Confederate Council.

There is, of course, the objection that under such a scheme too much power would be placed in the hands of the Board. To prevent the abuse of this power and to protect outside interests against unjust and arbitrary decisions it is suggested that there should be a right of appeal to an impartial body or Equity Tribunal whose findings would be submitted to the Confederate Council. The decisions of the latter would be final. If the enemy countries are to be disarmed when the war is won, it follows that their aircraft factories will be dismantled or destroyed. No new ones could be erected without the sanction of the Board. But it cannot be too strongly emphasised that all the activities envisaged in this proposal, the system of licensing and control, enforcement of the international aviation code, the divorce of civil and military aviation, are dependent upon the establishment of an International Air Police Force. Without it any plan to ensure the freedom of the air over the whole of the earth's surface will be stillborn.

3 St. John's House, DAVIES
Smith Square,
London, S.W.1.

SCIENCE AND ENEMY PRISONERS

SIR,—There must be a number of scientists among the prisoners of war now in British hands, in Britain or elsewhere. In the minds of some of these men there may be latent potentialities which could one day enrich not only their own country, but the whole world. It is not impossible that one of them may have the potential capacity to find after the war a method of preventing cancer, and another might alter the whole outlook of the civilised world with a study in pure science comparable in importance with Darwin's work on the origin of species. Others may have talent capable of producing smaller but nevertheless great discoveries for the practical and cultural benefit of mankind. The talent of these men may fade if they are intellectually starved.

Nothing could be less congenial to a scientific mind than a prison camp. The scientist needs some solitude and some mental stimulus if his mind is to receive those new ideas for research which are the basis of all scientific discovery. Solitude we cannot grant to prisoners of war, but some mental stimulus we can provide. There are ways in which those British scientists who felt so disposed could help to keep the minds of prisoners from slowly losing their capacity to discover. Obviously, prisoners cannot do ordinary scientific research, but they could receive the stimulus of knowing that though in a strange and hostile land, they are still part of the world of science.

Every scientist receives many offprints of scientific papers in subjects with which he is not immediately concerned. These are consigned forthwith to the wastepaper-basket. If they could be sent instead to some one who would direct them to the appropriate prison-camps, a start would be made—almost without cost—towards building up an organisation for keeping enemy scientists in the proper frame of mind to be useful world-citizens in the post-war period.

The organisation need not be elaborate, nor need it occupy time that could be better spent on the war effort. In my own branch of civil defence, even during periods when alerts are frequent, much time is necessarily spent in waiting. While another civil defence worker quite properly plays darts or cards or reads a novel or chats or smokes, I see no reason why one should not address a few envelopes to prisoner-of-war camps, and put inside them unwanted offprints received from fellow-scientists.

One would require to be told by the authorities what scientists are at what camps, and what their subjects are. The direction of offprints and other scientific literature to the proper camps would then be simple. Some scientists would probably send in their own new papers, and a few might contribute copies of *Nature* and *Endeavour*. The editors of specialist journals might agree to send in copies of their new issues, and thus reap a reward years later when present hatreds are forgotten and the seed sown in wartime has germinated and borne fruit.

I should be very grateful if any scientists to whom this idea appeals will communicate with me. Those of us who band ourselves together in this cause must of course be prepared to be told that we are friends of the enemy and to receive much abuse. I think it worth while to say that I am myself convinced of the justice of the British cause in this war, and am an ardent opponent of totalitarianism in all its forms. I should be happy to co-operate with anyone of any political views, whether militarist or pacifist, who thinks with me that science has a tremendous role to play in the world and that it must be international.

Others may perhaps start similar movements in

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connection with music, art, philosophy or other subjects in which a flame must be kept alight. If such movements are started, I hope that we may all work together to prevent waste of effort. No one taking part should devote to the work any time which he or she would otherwise have spent on the war effort.

Burnt Oak, **John R. Baker**
Kidlington, near Oxford.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Sir,—My letter in your issue of June 13th seems to have been widely misread. Permit me to restate the arguments.

(1) There can be no rational grounds for a generalised dislike of " the Jews " (or " women," or " the Irish "). Grounds are then to be sought in the realm of unreason. Scientific methods for the exploration of this field lie ready to hand. They should be used in preference to sentiment, personalities and appeals to prejudice. (2) Attributes (e.g. wealth, language) which differentiate and isolate a minority are commonly felt as irritant by the majority. Certain Jewish traditions are of this nature. Investigation might (I believe would) show that they have this effect. If so, it would be for Jews to consider how far they are necessary for the leading of a full and free personal and religious life. It is often politic to make concessions when dealing with primitive behaviour patterns. **E. T. O. Slater**

Union Society, Oxford.

REORGANISING EDUCATION

Sir,—The article in your issue of July 4th dealing with the reform of education supplies the reader with much food for thought. The first point which cannot fail to strike one forcibly is the continual and fanciful use of the word " Tory." The writer of the article tells us twice that this word is not to be used in a strictly political, but rather in a much wider, sense. Are we to understand then from the general tone of the article that all Christians are included under this heading, and that consequently Christian teaching is considered to be one of the chief enemies of the new education? If this is the case it is certainly to be hoped that the Churches will, as the writer suggests they may, " fight like mad dogs sooner than surrender their hold on teachers' training colleges." Again, the author says that " most unprejudiced people " will agree that the non-provided schools should be abolished altogether. Now could this statement, or indeed the whole tone of the article, interlarded as it is with continual references to a " Toryism " which exists only in the mind of the writer, be more prejudiced in character? No allowance is made for another point of view. The writer brands the Churches and the " Catholics " as dangerously conservative, entirely forgetting the very active part played by them in the history of education throughout the centuries, and he entirely neglects the good qualities inherent in the non-provided schools. It must be sincerely hoped that if The New Statesman and Nation wishes to be constructive it will publish another article on education giving a broader and less prejudiced survey of the problems for which a solution must be found at this time.

Strand House, **Hambleden**
W.C.2.

[By Tory we intended to include all those who refuse to contemplate changing the traditional structure of our society. It includes some Christians and many who are not Christians. Some Christians are in favour of drastic social change. Very many would agree with us that the non-provided schools have long outlived their usefulness. To urge that there should be a common standard of education, compulsory for all and that this cannot be guaranteed in non-provided schools, is neither to show prejudice against religious bodies nor to deny that they have played an important part in education in the past.—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

EXCHANGE OF POPULATION

Sir,—Miss Freda White admits that the Greek population violently expelled from Asia Minor by the Turks after the capture of Smyrna were saved from " utter catastrophe " by their transfer to Greece. She is quite right, and perhaps she will agree that the suffering involved was due in part to the fact that the expulsion was violent and sudden, and that it was to some extent reduced by efforts and organisation on the part of the League of Nations. It could have been more so had the movement of families been planned, and prepared with humane intention at both ends. Miss White goes on to say that " the death, misery, and personal loss to Near Eastern civilisation which were entailed are past computation." This seems an inappropriate time to lament the return to Greece of a population of Greek blood and speech! No nation has made a more united stand in defence of civilisation. Those settlers from Asia Minor and their children have shared, and are sharing, in the glory that is Greece. I note that Miss White's objections to transfer as an element in the solution of minority problems in Europe remain coloured by her views about Palestine. (She makes no further reference to Kenya, which she so oddly bracketed with Palestine in her article, as if their racial problems bore some resemblance to one another). She may have heard " individual Zionists " advocate expelling the Arabs to make room for Jews. Individuals holding extreme opinions are to be found everywhere. But, in the course of many visits to Palestine before and during the Arab rebellion, and in long and close connection with political Zionism, I have never heard any responsible Zionist advocate expelling the Arab population even to the fertile and empty land beyond Jordan. On the contrary, they consider such an idea entirely contrary to the spirit of their own claim to rebuild Palestine.

Blanche E. C. Dugdale

[Miss White writes: " My point was that it was a tragedy for the Greeks of Turkey, and for Asia Minor itself, that they were exchanged, and not left at peace in their homes. In any compulsory exchange of populations one side, at least, is bound to suffer wrong. As to Palestine, I cannot help feeling that respect for Mrs. Dugdale's great services to Zionism has muzzled her interlocutors. It has often been put to me, in word and in writing, that the expropriation of Arabs foreseen in the Peel Report would make room for the Jews of Europe: not, of course, by leaders, but by ordinary Zionists, who have no idea that ' the fertile and empty land beyond Jordan ' is already overpeopled in its watered and therefore cultivable area. In essentials the problem of the destructive pressure of a strong immigrant community upon the land-tenure and political prospects of indigenous peoples is the same in kind in all colonial areas: it differs only in degree."—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

THE SOLUTION

Sir,—Is this letter by Dorothy Hawkin just an attempt at sarcasm or what? No one minds sarcasm—it can be quite amusing—but I think many would find it extremely offensive, as we do, when used, apparently, first in having a crack at the Almighty, and secondly in having one at our Royal Family. I am amazed that you gave space to this letter. It is bad taste, and tastes bad, and I must say I have never before noticed that you have printed such mud-slinging in your issues.

E. M. Dawson

Sir,—Congratulations on publishing Dorothy Hawkin's superb letter. At least one journal shows still a little punch. What the workers of England need is the fierce scorn of an Aristophanes to counteract the slimy rubbish which the millionaires hand out. That letter on the young Kent has place of honour on our wall newspaper, and the whole factory roared with delight at it. Actually it increased production.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

I HAVE been reading *Manon Lescaut* again after twenty years, and thinking what a mistake it is to read the classics, and such a classic as this especially, too young. At twenty young men of my generation were totally unfitted to read eighteenth century literature, and were of course too inexperienced to know what words like passion, ruin and despair could mean. At that age we were very likely to be having our Manons, but a book like the amorous Abbé's flattered our actions instead of elucidating our hearts. And novels about the heart give little satisfaction until middle age. The young would be better off—I find myself thinking, with my Victorian nonconformist ancestors—if they read about science and economics instead of love. Another point that has struck me is how many times the sensibility to the idea of ruin has been transformed since the eighteenth century. Ruin is an idea that has been lost to us since the moral collapse in the West; and has been replaced, I supposed, by atrocity. What a distance there is between the hard, dry-eyed pages of Hemingway, Faulkner and Céline, and the clear, weeping cadences of *Manon Lescaut.** Is there such a thing as a broken heart in the modern novel? I do not remember one. Things, the modern writer seems to say, have gone beyond man's capacity to feel deeply—though the poems of Aragon since the war suggest a revival of sorrow—and power, rather than feeling, is the preoccupation of the writers whom I have named, even though it is represented in them negatively by powerless characters.

But at its beginning the English novel may be said to have been set afloat on a sea of tears. Richardson and Sterne are free with them. Contemporarily with Prévost, who came to England as an exile, they sailed out on a tremulous ocean with handkerchiefs dripping to the salt water. He translated Richardson and Richardson made Rousseau weep. But after one's long experience of the Victorian smelling salts and handkerchief one receives a real shock from Prévost. We were never asked to weep like this by the English novelists. Surely, our instinct protests, he asks us to weep at the wrong things. Richardson in *Clarissa*, Fielding in *Amelia*—the whole English novel asks us to weep at the unjust disasters which befall the virtuous. "Oh that I could sinne once see!" wrote George Herbert. *Manon Lescaut* lets us see it. The book calls upon us to weep for humanity, for the sorrows and disasters of the infatuated sinners.

Of course it is not quite like that. *Manon Lescaut* would not be the minor masterpiece it is if that was all there was to it. Really, the fat Benedictine, with his strange Protestant streak, his *p'tites affaires* all over the Continent, his not infrequent troubles about promissory notes, his flow of conversation and his 200 volumes of flat, luscious fictions and other literature, has pulled himself together for once and has touched a point far above his usual achievement. He has given to infatuation a style. His subject is not the anatomy of ruin but its poetry, its melody, its remorse that has no taint of regret. The joys and sorrows of passion are to be compared with the joys and sufferings of Christians on the way to Heaven, to the disadvantage of Christianity. The Chevalier des Grieux is not one who thinks merely the world well lost; he takes it as inevitable that the world *is* well lost. Nothing short of ruin satisfies the appetite of his heart. An infatuation is transfigured, deified. I imagine that *Manon Lescaut* must be one of the few really shocking stories—shocking, that is, to our moral sense in all its circumstantial details—which move us to the bottom of our hearts. What worthless people: des Grieux a senseless knave, Manon a good-time tart of incurable infidelity—and yet here we sit watching the excuses rise in our hearts as we read, believing in the tragic redemption of the couple, admiring the capacity of vessels so weak to hold and show us our passions. It was easy for Clarissa, we argue; she was virtuous. Roxana and Moll Flanders, those sound, trading Protestants, invested their gold-diggings and kept up the sacred middle-class appearances. The absence of forethought, their helpless possession by their love, is the salvation of Manon and her Chevalier. They cheat, but they love. Yet the Abbé has made even these indulgences unnecessary, for character, as the realists were to conceive it, is not his subject; the scene is not his subject either. With classical economy he has looked at his people and, instead of sprawling over the whole, he has abstracted one aspect and that a universal one—their essential innocence in the bondage of their passion. Yes, we feel they are innocent. They are unusual because des Grieux's passion and Manon's pleasure are realities for them which exclude everything else to an almost heroic degree. And Manon's redemption at the end is free from any dirty mark of that self-interest which hangs about the moral reformations of English characters—Moll Flanders for example—and points no arbitrary lesson. The lesson is merely the common one that in tranquillity we naturally perceive the bearing of our experience. Passion has not narrowed but has widened the perceptions. We do not doubt that Manon has perceived at last that her Chevalier's love is greater than riches; but it is really admirable of the Abbé to make her die nevertheless of the hardship of a virtuous life in the log cabin of New Orleans. It would have been intolerable if she had stood it. And in the pages of suspense before her death, when the Governor is proposing to part the lovers and make Manon marry his son, it is enormously satisfying to us that des Grieux goes off to kill the son and nearly does so. It is satisfying because there is more than a hint in this that, even in the ecstasy of repentance, des Grieux's unconscious still does not trust in her fidelity. He loves her too well to trust her. For Manon's mind, as we have seen over and over again, works with a beautiful, effortless lack of co-operation with her heart and body.

Because of its intensity and its power to isolate the mind, infatuation displays passion in clear epitome. The amiable detachment of Manon before the violence of des Grieux's feelings gives that feeling an exquisite relief. She, like ourselves, wonders at her heart. And des Grieux goes through all the recognised phases—recognised only as we read them. He wonders at her calm, he curses his own suspicions, apologises to her for accusing her of things that are true, paints himself black that she may appear whiter. In his jealousies—when incredulity is no longer possible—he becomes the ham actor which jealousy puts into human beings; his blasting denunciations collapse even as he turns to leave her for ever. Manon sometimes explains but never apologises. And to her great credit she is never bored by his reproaches. She recognises that she, like himself, is possessed by her idea. Once the image of Manon was stamped on his mind, at that first meeting at the inn, no amount of reasoning, no amount of treachery, could influence him. Crime and every baseness could ensue and yet leave their hands—no one cannot say clean; they are the dirtiest pair of hands in eighteenth century gallantry, but they simply seem to have no relation to their owners. And the Abbé's power to move us triumphs. There is that disgraceful episode at the height of the intrigue when Manon is going off to her rich would-be lover with the object of collecting the money and the jewels in advance and absconding with them. Left to herself she would obviously not commit such a theft. She would prefer infidelity to robbery under circumstances so superbly happy. Des Grieux, whom passion has made a cheat, knows only too well how Manon's feckless mind will work. They are both at the intense point of excitement, on the brink of the intrigue—when des Grieux brings the whole opprobrious enterprise to the ground with one of a sudden, heart-rending line:

"Manon, ne me trompez point; me serez vous fidéle"? The world stops, your heart jumps. The hand goes to the intolerable handkerchief once more. In the net of evil the human heart is caught in all its untouched naivety. How intently we listen to that voice so lucidly telling its story purged of all obscurities by its sorrow.

> I spent the whole night watching beside her, and praying Heaven to give her sweet and quiet sleep. O God, how sincere and eager were my prayers. And by what stern judgment didst Thou resolve to heed them not?
>
> Forgive me if I finished in few words a story that kills me. I have to tell you an illhap that has never had its like. My life is left me now to weep for it. But though I hear it in my memory unceasingly, my soul seems to recoil in horror each time I try to speak of it.

How is it that we must look to this prolific hack, this Dumas of the sentiments, for a description of feeling so full as this one is? Where, among ourselves, has this capacity gone? From behind their enormous and sodden cambric linen handkerchiefs the Victorians were apt to point with distaste at the choiceness of the sobs that wetted the elegant handkerchiefs of the eighteenth century. Sentimentality could not understand pure sentiment. And now, blunted by atrocity, we have lost the art of weeping altogether. Born two hundred years later in America, Manon, the good-time girl, becomes a "baby," the heroine of the tough novels. And when her body goes out on the rubber-tyred hearse, some dumb ox "feels bad" and calls for another high-ball. Ruin has indeed been ruined.

V. S. PRITCHETT

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[*] *The History of the Chevalier des Grieux and Manon Lescaut.* By L'Abbé Prévost. Translated by Helen Waddell. *Constable.*

WALTER DE LA MARE

Collected Poems. By WALTER DE LA MARE. *Faber.* 12s. 6d.

It is easy to gush about Walter de la Mare's poetry: and it is equally easy to dismiss or ignore it. It is easy to use it as a stick with which to beat younger contemporary poets (as at least one reviewer of this book has done); it is equally easy to quote from it as the final example of a tradition turned towards sleep, dream, shadows, and death (as I. A. Richards does in his essay *Science and Poetry*).

The difficult task is to attempt a critical estimate of this poet whom, on the face of it, there seems so little to say about: he is so completely taken —or dismissed—for granted.

The first question a critic should ask, surely, of a poet is: Does his poetry create a world? Next, he should try to decide the qualities which make up this world. Lastly, he should relate this world to the worlds of other poets, looking for significant similarities and differences.

More than that of any other contemporary poet, de la Mare's poetry creates an independent, self-sufficient world of its own, like a walled-in garden shut off from the world of actuality. His writing goes direct to the timeless subjects of poetry—death, dream, "the mystery at the heart of things." He uses the poetic vocabulary of the romantics without self-consciousness: indeed, this only arises when he attempts to use a modern vocabulary (as in *Dreams*, the last poem in this volume). When he does come into contact with the specifically modern, he does so with the air of a country child confronted by the Albert Memorial.

Of course, to some readers, an archaic vocabulary and a generalised subject matter make Walter de la Mare at once a "timeless" poet and a reproach to all other modern poets. To others, who require a modernised vocabulary and references to politics and machinery, it convicts him of being an outsider. Actually, both these points of view are superficial. De la Mare creates an imaginative world which he approaches at a different level of consciousness and intellect from other poets. This world has a good deal in common with, say, Rilke, when he writes of childhood; or with Eliot in his most recent poems, *East Coker* and *Burnt Norton*, where he is much obsessed with memories, dreams and time.

In closing all the doors of his consciousness to the phenomena and even the feelings which one thinks of as peculiarly modern, Walter de la Mare has one great advantage: he evades the problem of having to cope with the fashionable, the ephemeral, that which seems important to us and may not to other generations. But he runs another kind of risk: that of missing life altogether in the course of missing it as it is actually lived by his contemporaries. His subject matter tends at times to an excessive thinning down, through lack of a robust diet of the intractable material of everyday life. Sometimes he becomes over-whimsical, somnolescent, childish instead of child-like, in poems which Humbert Wolfe imitated all too easily and effectively.

The fascination of reading de la Mare is to watch, though, how marvellously his genius steers him away, for the most part, from the sentimental. At his best his poetry has a quality which is only to be found in the purest lyrics: Shakespeare's lyrics, a poem or two of Poe, Blake's *Songs of Innocence*. This truly indescribable quality is of creating a poem in the limpid sounds and translucent imagery of words, which we do not take to refer beyond the words to the reality from which words draw their meanings. The words are suspended like a screen, between us and reality, and although, of course, they derive from reality, we do not peer through them back on to their derivations. The "yellow sands" of Shakespeare's lyric are associated only with that lyric, they do not make us think of yellow sands which we have known.

More fantastic and highly imaginative poems have been written than these; yet de la Mare is the only poet whom I can think of who baffles me in the way that the Shakespeare of the lyrics does: he writes lyrics which seem to be by no one and about nothing but the lyrics themselves, and which are yet completely satisfying.

Sometimes he writes a poem in which the real and the mysterious seem fused. One can read "Mist" and imagine it to be a picture conjured in the poet's mind, and then suddenly realise how true it is:

Sometimes in moods of gloom—like mist
Enswathing hill and wood—
A miracle of sunshine breaks
Into my solitude.

In scattered splendour burns the dew;
Still as in dream, the trees
Their vaulted branches echo make
To the birds' ecstasies.

What secret influence was this
Made all dark brooding vain?
Has then the mind no inward sun?—
The mists cloud down again:
Stealthily drape the distant heights,
Blot out the songless tree:
Into cold silence flit the thoughts
That sang to me.

This book is not printed in chronological order: indeed, its arrangement is as baffling and perplexing—and yet as strangely right and satisfying—as every poem it contains. One can pick out the later poems from the earlier, and see how the poet's development has been towards a sharpening and focusing of his vision. The later poems are no less trance-like, but less wrapped round in gossamer webs, than such old favourites as "Very Old are the Woods" and "The Traveller."

Technically, one takes de la Mare for granted as exquisitely accomplished, together with everything else. Yet it would be a pity to leave him there in the isolation of his achievement without pointing out that he has introduced into English a use of narrative which recalls Verlaine's astonishing poem about the conversation of two old lovers in the park. *On the Esplanade* describes a dialogue between mother and daughter, in which the daughter rejects the suggestion that she should take a lover. It ends:

Turned then the twain about to see
An East as rayless, grey, and bland,
Stretching into infinity,
And vacant windows glassily
Edging the pebbled strand;

While, poised in air, a bird of snow
Faltered on lifted wing—to glide
And glance at this strange to-and-fro,
That greying hair, that cheek's young glow—
And shrill, sad challenge cried.

Nor is de la Mare always without reflection on the "contemporary situation." "Motley" and "The Marionettes" are amongst the most remarkable poems of the last war: in their vivid remoteness from the scene of action they have the nightmarishness of this war; for it is a world of blood and tears and hysteria, whose rumour reaches an enclosed garden.

If I had space to relate de la Mare's poetic world to other ones, it would be, perhaps, with the *Emaux and Camées* of Gautier. Both poets create remote, enduring, beautiful, self-sufficient worlds, and yet Gautier's adult sophistication is the opposite of de la Mare's childish innocence. Each method to some extent shows up the weakness of the other. De la Mare looks woolly beside Gautier's cut stones. Gautier appears dapper and self-conscious beside de la Mare's plunges into the unconscious. De la Mare's writing has an atmospheric quality which the French lacks; but the French has an intelligence which de la Mare lacks. De la Mare's aesthetic sensibility takes him very far (what an achievement is the poem called "The Feckless Dinner Party," for example), but when it comes to poems about real people, or the poems even about Shakespeare's characters, the poet can only grow a tree of ivy over the reality, obscuring and beautifying, but not penetrating or adding to it. Nevertheless, Walter de la Mare is simply one of the most individual writers of our age—with his face turned a little too resolutely towards the shadows perhaps—but fully able to face the most blinding searchlight this age can produce.

STEPHEN SPENDER

JAPANESE AGGRESSION

Japanese Frenzy. By SIMON HARCOURT-SMITH. *Hamish Hamilton.* 6s.

Japan, a World Problem. By H. J. TIMPERLEY. *The John Day Company, New York.* $1.75.

It was in the nature of propaganda that the Japanese, who yesterday were the brave gentlemen of the Pacific, should be accused of "a frenzy of national ambition, a sort of congenital jingoism," that they should be called "apes" to whose lives "violence is the eternal undertone" and that in their history for the last five centuries "nothing has appeared to redeem the steady glorification of violence and banditry." This purely propagandist approach has the unfortunate effect of obscuring the real problems. The decision to accept Japan's military challenge does not make it unnecessary to consider the economic, psychological and racial problems which have been commonly (and wrongly) used in the past to excuse Japan's aggressive policy. Yet in his very lively book Mr. Harcourt-Smith ignores all these questions: he even overlooks the part played by Britain and the United States in encouraging Japan's dangerous state of mind first by the aggravation of the colour bar and then by appeasement and the profitable sale of war materials to the aggressor. His bright journalistic panorama of Japan's mania for conquest may please the public of 1942. One wishes his talents had been used to quicken the imagination of the public at an earlier stage of the Far Eastern struggle. It was less popular to support China during the years when Mr. Harcourt-Smith was at the Foreign Office and the British Legation in Nanking.

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43, Essex Street, W.C.2.

Mr. H. J. Timperley deals with the underlying causes of Japan's aggression, and with the peculiar role of violence in Japanese life and policy. Prior to the fifth century A.D. Japan was a military nation without any elements of civilisation; during the fifth and sixth centuries she came under the intellectual influence of Korea and, in the seventh, she began the "period of imitation of China and things Chinese." Japanese civilisation of that time was merely a transplantation of Chinese civilisation.

Mr. Timperley asks the interesting question about Japan. Is it true that the tremendous task Japan achieved of assimilating so much of Chinese philosophy, poetry, painting, architecture, etc., "was accomplished at the cost of a more gradual development which might in the end have yielded a more original and truly creative civilisation?" This query suggests another unanswered question as to why Japan, which has borrowed so much in her fifteen centuries of recorded history, has copied the form of things without their spirit; Chinese civilisation and culture, the Buddhist culture of India, and, lastly, Western civilisation. Some Japanese writers make a merit of this fact—Dr. Fujisawa, Professor of the Great Oriental Culture College of Tokyo, for instance, writes that "Japan has absorbed the world civilisation without running the risk of being absorbed by them" . . . "It has been our established tradition to study alien culture," he boasts, "without impairing our Yamata spirit."

Certainly, the knowledge of having borrowed so much from the Chinese is an important factor in Japanese psychology. In the eighteenth century, when Shintoism was revived, with its doctrine of the divine origin of the Yamata race, its leaders were consciously building up a movement of self-assertion against the inroads that Chinese culture had made in their history.

Mr. Timperley gives us a very interesting sketch of the early days of Japanese expansion in the South Seas from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, by which time their rulers, becoming alarmed at the spread of Christianity by the Dutch and Spanish traders who were their most serious rivals, made one of the most unusual decisions of history. But for this decision which "sealed up the country against any but the most carefully regulated intercourse with foreign countries for two hundred years, the Japanese might have become the great Power in Asiatic waters" and their rise "might have been comparable to that of Great Britain in European waters." This phrase, quoted by Mr. Timperley, comes from Professor Kuno's brilliant analysis of his country's history.

Neither Mr. Timperley nor Mr. Harcourt-Smith lays sufficient stress on the influence of British policy in modern Japan. Mr. Harcourt-Smith admits that British capital was paid "to overthrow the sixteenth and last Tokugawa Shogun (1868)," but Japan's rapid expansion on the Asiatic mainland before the European war was greatly assisted by British influence, sometimes actively and at other times benevolently neutral. The shadows of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance were cast over Geneva and found substance in Sir John Simon and others, and they were still visible until Japan completed her circle of aggression by attacking British interests in the Pacific at the end of last year.

Mr. Harcourt-Smith is content to end his book with a summary of the present war in the Pacific and to assure us that "our enemies are not only the Japanese militarists but the Japanese people as well." Mr. Timperley, on the other hand, realises that no useful purpose is served in calling the Japanese people "seventy-five million madmen, all prepared to commit any crime at the behest of the State," and his concluding chapter is an excellent outline of the kind of peace settlement "which would help to restore and greatly strengthen the international order for the Pacific and in the world at large so that orderly international relationships may always prevail and aggressive wars may not recur."

Japan, a World Problem is a valuable contribution to the problem of how to deal with aggressor nations when victory has been won. There is a certain similarity between the Asiatic aggressor and his partner in Europe, although there are important differences in historical development. *Japanese Frenzy*, like Lord Vansittart's *Black Record*, confuses the issue and can only stimnlate bitterness which solves no problem.

DOROTHY WOODMAN

SAVAGERY AND CIVILISATION

Masters of Political Thought, Vol. I; Plato to Machiavelli. By M. B. FOSTER. *Harrap.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Foster begins with a quotation from Dr. Johnson. "Almost everything that sets us above savages has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean." By savages is meant, no doubt, men without a sense of human dignity, and so lower than the animals, who have an unconscious dignity of their own. Human dignity comes from a conscious desire to live up to a standard, and a sense of failure to do so, a blend of self-criticism and self-reliance. The savage is the man who is for ever grovelling or bragging: at the mercy of vanity one moment and terror the next. Civilisation means nothing unless it can deliver us from the antics of superstition and megalomania.

Here can be followed some of the steps—steps down as well as up—of the eighteen hundred year ladder from Athens to Renaissance Italy. Mr. Foster's order is chronological, but this does not mean that he thinks political theorists write better books the nearer they come to our own time. There is more of the game for them to see, but they do not always see it.

What these men of the Mediterranean did see is that human dignity rests on two things, an obligation of the individual first to himself and secondly to his fellows. In Egypt, if you take one look at the Pyramids, you can see the short cut to dignity which tries to get it at other people's expense. At all costs Pharaoh is to be equipped, not only for this life, which is hardly worth his while, however much better than anyone else's, but for the next. To do this adequately nothing is too much to expect from his subjects: they get all they need by dragging huge stones about and being fed while they do it to breed more stone-draggers for later Pharaohs. Now cross the sea to the north, and you are in a different climate. The Acropolis is the glorification and the equipment, not of a superman, but of a city. It was under the shadow of Athene's Temple that Plato imagined a Republic, the rulers of which earned their authority by moral and intellectual superiority, by austerity and devotion, and their subjects were made good men by virtue of their membership with one another. Only the few achieve full dignity through the worship of Athene, but those who can rise to its full claims on man's character reach the height at which a man becomes the guardian of his own standard, bound to do what he knows to be right wherever he may be and whatever may happen to him.

Nearly all of what the Graeco-Roman world had to contribute to the theory of the State is present or implicit in Plato, and that is why he speaks in his own words in more than a third of this book. There follows a series of excerpts from Aristotle, Cicero, and, later on, Machiavelli. These are designed to show, first, how the idea

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ROUTLEDGE

of the City State grew into that of the universal society, and contracted again into that of the nation; how human equality came to be set up against slavery-by-nature, and how Aristotle's idea of the contemplative life and Cicero's of an over-riding law of nature contributed to strengthen the sense of the individual's responsibility to hold to a standard transcending the obligations of citizenship.

To the other set of values, which we derive from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, not so much space is devoted. Mr. Foster seems a little shy of putting Christ alongside Socrates, conviction of sin alongside conviction of ignorance. The Temple at Jerusalem would stand, if it were still there, for human dignity at least as definitely as does the Acropolis: without its message the answer to the Pyramids is not complete. That answer is represented here by three chapters: "Augustine," "The Interval before Aquinas" and "Aquinas" himself.

In his comments here, Mr. Foster does show that he realises how much the idea of the Will of God has got to do with civilisation. He puts to the believer in the future of democracy the two-fold question: "Whether the individual can bear the responsibility of a private judgment which is really private, in the sense that it is destitute of guidance by an authority higher than himself," and: "Whether the earthly city can be excluded permanently from a sphere which is filled by nothing else." Awkward questions these for anyone who knows enough history to realise what liberty owes to people who were ready and willing to go to the stake and the scaffold for their beliefs, as Aristotle's contemplative man would scarcely have been willing and as Plato's philosopher ran little or no risk of being asked to do. The trouble is that ordinary people will not willingly be burnt alive for a standard of life, however high, or for a theory however rational. Nobody minds dying for an object of worship, if by worship be meant a blend of awe and love. And you can only live fully by that for which you would willingly die.

So what the American university students, for whose studies Mr. Foster's book is designed, must make up their minds about is, how to bring home, to themselves and (if they are given the chance) to other people, conviction of ignorance and conviction of sin. Only so can be exorcised that suicidal self-complacency numbed by which the civilised man is fair game to the savage.

KENNETH BELL

VICHY IN PERSPECTIVE

The Government of Vichy. By LIEUT.-COLONEL PIERRE TISSIER. *Harrap.* 15s.

Lieut.-Colonel Tissier, having undertaken the almost hopeless task of presenting during the lifetime of the Government of Vichy an objective picture of its origins, its programme and its failure, offers the student of French affairs a most useful compendium of Pétain's attempts at legislation and reform up to the end of 1941. Naturally enough, the most satisfactory part of his book is the first, in which he reviews events and trends which it is now possible to observe with some degree of historical impartiality. The birth of the dictatorship, the exploitation of defeat by men whose "hatred for the régime silenced their love for France," the murder of the Republic at a time when her murderers believed Britain would soon give in or be conquered, and hoped to secure under the protection of German tanks the triumph of their reactionary views, all this is clearly set out by the author in irreproachable perspective. So is the series of confidence tricks by which Pétain and Laval liquidated the elected Assemblies and the 1875 Constitution, abolished the use of the word Republic, and proceeded to govern arbitrarily under the cover of "constitutional acts" devoid of any constitutional value.

The analysis of the legislation of Vichy which follows suffers to some extent from a fault inherent in all such contemporary studies: it is often overtaken by events. Vichy personnel changes swiftly, and so do the laws and decrees and semi-official organisations of a government unceasingly subjected to the conflicting pressures of public opinion and of the enemy, to the internal strains and stresses of rival conceptions and ambitions within the administration itself. Much of the detail already needs bringing up to date; but the main structure of the book is sound. The whole tottering edifice of Vichy laws and decrees aiming at strengthening the State, at "renovating" the population, at reducing unemployment, at establishing a planned economy and restarting the economic life of the country, is shown in its true light with merciless logic. The main impression left by this exposition of Pétain's "National Revolution" is one of futility, of the lamentable confusion of minds which hoped to regenerate France, partly by copying the Nazis in their police methods and their anti-semitic policy, partly by attempting a return to the institutions which the French Revolution scrapped because they were obsolete and unsuited to the aspirations of the French masses.

The whole analysis leads the reader step by step to an inescapable conclusion: Vichy's collaboration policy and attempts at internal reorganisation were doomed in advance for practical as well as moral reasons, and their failure is now fully proved by facts. The book closes on a dramatic summary of events—e.g., the shooting of Laval and Déat, the outburst of sabotage in the summer of last year, President Herriot's article in the *American Mercury* in support of the democracies—which showed that France was "in a state of masked revolt" against Vichy. Modern methods of oppression may have driven the revolt underground since this book was written—but one event has done more than any other single occurrence since the armistice to prove to the world and to France herself her attachment to certain fundamental principles of justice and to the ideas and aspirations of which Vichy and Nazism are the declared enemies. It is a matter for regret that M. Tissier has not been able to complete his picture of France's revival by including, even as a last-minute addition, a study of the Riom trial.

It is no doubt difficult for Frenchmen to-day to reach clear and wholly dispassionate judgments on the Third Republic and on the statesmen arraigned before the Riom court, whose defence seems to have restored some of France's self-respect and confidence in her past and future: but a review of the trial might well have enabled the author to remove from his book some inconsistencies in his references to the pre-armistice régime. After accusing Pétain and Laval of "murdering" the Republic (pp. 12-16) M. Tissier takes it for granted that the Third Republic is finally dead: "Born of one defeat," he tells us, "it could not survive another" (p. 93); and in his conclusions (p. 307) he seems to share the murderers' conviction that the régime they liquidated was wholly bad:

> France felt an undeniable need for a renewal. The institutions existing in June, 1940, were no longer adapted to actual conditions; and indeed they had nothing truly democratic about them but their outward appearance, the mere shell. It was absolutely essential to begin again from zero and build completely anew.

The book would gain in clarity if we were told precisely in what ways the institutions of 1940 were undemocratic and what plans are being laid for "beginning again from zero." If it is to be assumed that these are the views of the "Fighting

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France" organisation, in which Lieut.-Colonel Tissier occupies an important position, how are they to be reconciled with the argument that General de Gaulle "having always declared his intention to have his acts ratified under the conditions laid down by the Constitution of 1875, appears . . . as the sole legal authority in accordance with that Constitution"? (p. 54). Nobody will question the fact that the social and economic institutions of the Third Republic needed modernising so that the work of the French Revolution might be completed in the economic sphere, and that democracy might become a living reality. Is it proposed to recommend to future French representative assemblies social and economic reforms, leaving intact the political institutions of the Third Republic? To "build from zero" was in the past a common failing of French drafters of new constitutions; the longest-lived so far of these constitutions was that of 1875, which precisely did not start from zero but built on existing institutions. And is Pétain's failure not due largely to his having attempted, in his own way, to go back to zero—with the naive idea that zero was to be found in 1788? M. Tissier would undoubtedly strengthen the claims of the "Fighting French" to political responsibility were he to follow up his study of Vichy's failure by a clarification of some of the inconsistencies noted in his book whenever criticism makes way for the expression of constructive views.

JEROME JENATTON

THE FATHER OF OSCAR WILDE

Victorian Doctor. By T. G. WILSON. *Methuen.* 15*s*.

Victorian Ireland is ground almost untrodden by modern chroniclers and biographers. Among its notable figures Parnell alone has attracted treatment both competent and intelligent. Such books as have been written about other Irish leaders of the period are with few exceptions little more than works of edification and exhortation, bearing no evidence of even superficial historical research, let alone imaginative detachment. "I am glad to say," said Dr. McTaggart, the Cambridge philosopher, Tory by politics, after reading the life of some Young Irelander, "that there are no dates in the book, as this assures me that the Irish will never win freedom." Nineteenth Century Ireland as a whole also awaits its serious historian, although in significant incident—think of the Famine, when Ireland passed through a trial as great as modern warfare has brought to any country in Europe—the century was richer than the eighteenth, the subject of Lecky's monumental work. But life moves slowly in Ireland, and perhaps it has been felt that the things are not old enough to be in histories or new enough to be in the reader's mind: such things are the things that are the least known. Or it may be that all that was said of the baleful effects of the Union from the artistic, intellectual and social points of view has rendered the subject of nineteenth-century Ireland unattractive to sensitive minds. Thackeray wrote of the very high-life-below-stairs look of post-Union Dublin; he was unjust but very depressing.

A mental torpor certainly affected Dublin after the Union; but there was a renaissance already in the eighteen-twenties, as Dr. T. G. Wilson shows in *Victorian Doctor*, an excellent book which should inspire further studies on the same period. His Victorian doctor is Oscar Wilde's father, Sir William Wilde, who was born in 1815. Protestant Ireland did not again produce a Swift or a Berkeley, or a figure of Grattan's grace and nobility; but among the contemporaries and friends of Wilde as a young man were Petrie, the great archaeologist, Lever, Joseph Le-Fanu, William Rowan Hamilton, the world-famous mathematician, and the eloquent advocate Isaac Butt, whom Wilde was to "meet again at Philippi," as his son met Edward Carson. Wilde was not the most gifted, and he was far from being the most attractive of this group of intellectuals; but he led—as ophthalmic surgeon, as archaeologist and traveller, as husband of Speranza, tragedy Queen in a suburban theatre, as father of the grubby boys Oscar and Willie (he did not see them grown-up)—a more interesting and a more curious life than any of the others. The high-lights of his experience were tragic: the accidental death by fire at a ball of his two favourite illegitimate daughters and the libel action, brought by a Miss Travers against his wife, in which he was the real defendant. He was accused of having seduced a patient in his consulting room; wiser than his son afterwards he did not enter the witness-box, and in spite of all Butt's eloquence, the lady's virtue was assessed by the jury at a mere farthing. Dr. Wilson tells us that he never recovered from the scandal. He lost his conversational vivacity and became more parsimonious than ever, dirtier and uglier. Was it due to him that Dublin got the name of the "City of Dreadful Knights"?

What is less known is the importance of Wilde's scientific work, but Dr. Wilson has succeeded in disposing of the notion, promoted by writers about Oscar, that he was no more than a provincial doctor of mediocre attainment and a fusty old antiquary with a penchant for skirt-chasing, who accumulated an enormous brood of illegitimate children. He was a European pioneer in otology, who also deserved well of his country for his loving and scholarly devotion to its ancient records. In Dr. Wilson's book there is much that does not relate to Wilde himself; but the reader who is attracted by medical history will delight in the digressions, among which is an account of Viennese hospitals a hundred years ago. A postscript on Speranza's widowhood is well done. This has for caption W. B. Yeats's poem, "That the Night Come," of which perhaps it should have been said that the lines were not inspired by Lady Wilde but by another. Among the 61 illustrations by the author himself is a drawing from a photograph of Oscar Wilde as a child. Oscar seems already to have been a pituitary type—a condition on which Mr. Bernard Shaw has discussed when writing of Lady Wilde.

J. M. HONE

MINISTERING ANGEL

One Pair of Feet. By MONICA DICKENS. *Michael Joseph.* 10*s*. 6*d*.

Miss Dickens chose nursing for her war service and became a probationer at the civilian hospital of a small town. There were all the usual trimmings, unsuitable buildings, uncomfortable uniform, endless cleaning, tired feet, overwork, etiquette:

> "Nurse," said Sister, looking at the dirt on my apron from under her mauve lids, "You must never, never do such a thing again." I was staggered. I asked her what I had done; what she meant? "You know perfectly well what I mean," she said. "I am exceedingly shocked." So was I, but with surprise, not horror. "But really, Sister," I began, "I don't know——" "How long have you been here, Nurse?" "Two months." "And you mean to stand there and tell me that you don't know that you may not address a member of the medical staff directly, but only through the medium of someone senior to yourself? How you could do it, Nurse, I don't know. How you could bring yourself to do such a thing—" She looked at me as if I were a bad smell.

Those who know any over-institutionalised community will recognise that scolding, and the perverted sense of values behind it. Miss Dickens's cheerful book, indeed, may do much to stimulate reform of the nursing profession, the more so that she is tart but not spiteful.

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FREDA WHITE.

New Complete Russian-English Dictionary (**New Orthography**). Edited by LOUIS SEGAL. *Lund Humphries.* 42s.

The 944 pages of this admirably produced volume provide at once a living monument to the skill and scholarship of the editor and his compilers, and a permanent record of the present scope and patient prowess of the printers, for it is the fulfilment of a project of long standing, to "embody all the changes introduced in the Russian language after the Revolution." Thus, apart from the change to 32 letters in the alphabet, which now absorb the three letters excluded by Lenin in 1918, there are lists of special words relating to naval, military and aeronautical terms and their abbreviations, and several extra pages devoted to geographical and historical terms, while particular attention has been devoted to the development, over the last quarter of a century, of science, economics and the cinema in U.S.S.R.

The dictionary contains also a great range of idiomatic expressions and proverbs, and the origin of words adopted from other languages. These can be made a source of absorbing discoveries and they testify to the editor's ingenuity: he appears to have hair-combed terms in current use, and his transcriptions are lucid and up to date. Perhaps the most original feature is the extension of the verbs: the conjugation of all the irregulars is given and the "aspects" indicated throughout—an innovation in the compilation of such a work, and of paramount importance to all foreign students.

A word of praise to the printers for their new orthography. The use of small-type capitals is a delight to the eye, so rapidly being conditioned to smaller type printed on coarsened paper, and displays to the best advantage the proper significance of the heavy down-strokes and the many hair-lines within the characters.

For those with little knowledge of Russian, who may enjoy eccentricities in other languages, there are many fascinating pursuits. Under the 3-page historical dictionary it will be found that three letters suffice for an option on "Young" or "Jung"; and it will be a surprise to some to find that Tchaikowsky and Cimarose (*sic*) have the same initial letter.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

SIBELIUS: *Tapiola.* Boston Symphony Orch., cond. Koussevitzky (H.M.V. DB5992–3).

MOZART: *Symphony in A* (*K*201). Boston Symphony Orch., cond. Koussevitzky (H.M.V. DB5957–8).

BORODIN: *Prince Igor Overture*, and

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Sleeping Beauty Waltz.* Hallé Orch., cond. Leslie Howard (Col. DX1078–9).

LIADOFF: *Kikimora.* Hallé Orch., cond. Adrian Boult (H.M.V. G3288).

VERDI: *La Traviata: Preludes to Acts I and III.* N.B.C. Symphony Orch., cond. Toscanini (H.M.V. DB5956).

BACH: *Four Duets for Violin and Viola.* Fr. Grinke and Watson Forbes (Decca K1072).

WEBER: *Piano Sonata in A flat, op.* 39. Noël Mewton-Wood (Decca K1061–4).

RAWSTHORNE: *Three French Nursery Songs.* Sophie Wyss (Decca K1065).

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in C, op.* 53 ("*Waldstein*"). Moiseiwitsch (H.M.V. C7560–2).

SCHUBERT: *Sonata in A minor, op.* 164. Kathleen Long (Decca K1067–8).

CHOPIN: *Impromptu in A flat*, and
,, *Waltz in C sharp minor, op.* 64.
,, *Etude in C minor, op.* 10, *No.* 12, and
,, *Polonaise in A.* Louis Kentner (Col. DX 1081 and 1083).

HANDEL: "With Thee th'Unsheltered Moor" (*Solomon*), and

MOZART: "A Maiden's in an Evil Plight" (*La Finta Giardiniera*), Isobel Baillie with Orch. (Col. DX1080).

MOZART: "Whither Vanished" ("*The Marriage of Figaro*"), Joan Hammond with Orch. (Col. DX1082).

I believe most people would agree that in the tragic landscape of *Tapiola* Sibelius achieved not only one of his own greatest works but one of the greatest elegies in all music—a movement comparable, in depth of feeling, to the slow movement of the *Eroica.* It is music so starkly terrible that one cannot bear to hear it often; there are passages which, even now, I prefer not to listen to when I am alone. But there is a time for every work of art, and that time recurs—even for the most rebarbative masterpieces. The new issue is a very fine one, though I do not think it will replace the old for those who happen to possess the first volume of the Sibelius Society. A few points in the score emerge more clearly under Koussevitzky's baton, but the last bars—although correctly played according to the score—seem to me to *sound* better without the comma before the final B major chord.

The quirks of American recording are mysterious: of two issues by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, one (*Tapiola*) is quite unobjectionable, the other (the Mozart Symphony) rather harsh. This is the more regrettable as the symphony itself is Mozart at his most delicious—a gay and irresistible work, played with exemplary crispness.

I need not enlarge here on the qualities of the *Prince Igor* Overture, but must point out that it is a piece the vividness of which needs to be reflected in the temperament of the conductor. This is, I am afraid, rather a dull performance. Liadoff is better served—in fact, very well indeed. *Kikimora* is a small masterpiece (*genre L'Apprenti Sorcier*) and all its qualities are brought out by an irreproachable performance and recording.

Unlike Liadoff's, the world of *La Traviata* has no magic that is not purely human. That is no disadvantage where sincerity reigns—as it always does in Verdi. This record of the two affecting little preludes is well worth having. The violin *unisoni* alone is something only Toscanini can wring from a body of string players.

Like Mozart's, Bach's *Duets* are wonderful feats of composer's virtuosity, as well as being enchantingly beautiful. Grinke and Forbes give a performance of extraordinary finish, which incidentally vindicates the title far better than the keyboard version of these little pieces. Do not allow this disc to slip by you unheeded.

The new piano issues are of quite special interest. The sonatas by Weber, Beethoven and Schubert were all written at a time when the form had attained its most monumental phase and was, with the symphony, the most serious vehicle of musical thought. I have never been able to understand why at least three of Weber's four sonatas are so much neglected, for, besides being made of the most lovely material, they are formally satisfactory and very effectively written for the instrument. The A flat is probably the best of all and certainly counts among Weber's most inspired creations. Noël Mewton-Wood's playing of it is always interesting and sensitive, and sometimes magnificent. One could quarrel with the interpretation of passages here and there; but I think it is plain, from this issue alone, that here is a new pianist of the highest talent—possibly even of genius. In spite of his extreme youth, his playing shows not only a technique *à toute épreuve*, but a musical intellect of remarkable depth and

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power. Mewton-Wood is among the few living pianists whom I would entrust with the larger works of Busoni—the *Fantasia Contrapuntistica*, the *Sonatina Seconda*, the great *Concerto*.

The "Waldstein" is not, of course, down Weber's street. Its textual affinity with the G major Piano Concerto hardly needs stressing, but from a purely technical point of view it is, I should have thought, an even more formidable affair. Sheer difficulty, if not surmounted with apparent ease, is apt to result in brilliant superficiality; and this, I feel, is what has happened to Moiseiwitsch's playing in general, and here in particular. He takes the Rondo at what I can only describe as a cautious pace—cautious in view of the appalling difficulties to be encountered later on in the movement, if one starts at what would seem the natural speed of the theme. This is one of the great problems of this sonata—another is the iron control required during the transition from the Intermezzo; after that the movement should soar steadily into a sky that clears as the music rises, until the theme appears at last in full sunlight. Nothing is tolerable here save complete success: a respectworthy rendering such as this, gets us nowhere—especially when the piano is placed in as dead a studio as this recording suggests.

From the latter point of view the Schubert issue is vastly more satisfactory—and not from that point of view alone. The Sonata is abrupt (the usual result of Schubert's efforts at concentration) but full of poetry, and Kathleen Long plays it with straightforward affection and the ease of complete knowledge. An enviable set, this.

Kentner's *rubato* is, as I have had occasion to point out before, almost certainly not Chopin's; and he plays the *Polonaise* very slowly and heavily indeed. I cannot like these records, but would not wish to be dogmatic about them.

Alan Rawsthorne's *French Nursery Rhymes* are pretty and curious, if not among their composer's best things. They are admirably sung. So are the last two records in my list, though "*Dove sono*" has an impossible echo. EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 650

Set by G. W. Stonier

We offer the usual prizes for last words of animals. (E.g., the swan: "I think I am going to sing"). A set of three last sayings is requested from competitors, though of course any number may be submitted.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, July 27th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 647

Set by Germaine Necker

Despite Miss Rose Macaulay, the notion prevails that men behave and feel differently from women, at least in contemporary England. A first prize of two guineas and a second prize of half-a-guinea are offered for the best aphorisms upon this supposed difference as shown in three of the following characters: The Bore, the Puritan, the Hypochondriac, the Optimist, the Pessimist, the Busybody, the Animal-Lover, the Rake, the Dandy, the Politician.

Report by Germaine Necker

Let me start by quoting M. Snow: "Men are timid, gossipy, and sentimental: women are hard, ruthless and lion-hearted. (There is no reason to suppose that this is so; but everyone will like to hear it.)" Therefore the aphorisms I am going to quote will be instances not of absolute truth but of "what people want to hear"—that is, of wit.

The Animal-lover.

He hunts three times a week,
She black markets for her Peke. "Tanked Up"

A man wants a dog to worship him; a woman wants a dog to worship. Phiz

The Bore.

The female bore paralyses by her nerveless woolliness; the male by his toxic precision.

D. W. Barker

He bores you with what he has done; she with what she has said. E. W. Fordham

The Busybody.

"Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "There is a difference. You are to consider that the impertinent interferences of a woman spring from lightness of mind and lack of occupation: they are natural and must in some sort be indulged. Your male busybody has no such excuse. His prying interest in other people's business is an affront to nature. I would stamp on him as I would stamp on a blackbeetle."

Allan M. Laing

The Dandy.

(Male) Dresses to impress himself.
(Female) Dresses to impress others.

I. Drazin

Lady A.: How simple life must be for a man—none of the agony of finding yourself dressed the same as another woman.

Lord B.: Ah, but how much worse to find yourself dressed *wrong*! H. B. Forster

The Hypochondriac.

He curses, but she caresses, an imaginary martyrdom. E. W. Fordham

Le malade imaginaire s'imagine qu'il a la sympathie de tous: et *la* malade—qu'elle en manque et en a besoin. O. Well

The Puritan.

The man feels that he is gaining something: the woman that she is missing everything.

Sam Platts

If a man is a puritan, everyone wonders why. If a woman is a puritan, everyone says she must be sex-starved. Musia A. Renbourn

I recommend that the second prize go to E. W. Fordham for the two aphorisms quoted above, and that the first prize be divided between L. V. Upward and F.C.C.

The Bore.

The male bore obtains his material from his achievements; the female bore gets hers from her woes.

The Busybody

Masculine officiousness is merely a form of conceit: feminine officiousness is, largely, a form of curiosity.

The Animal-lover

A man and a woman who lavish the bulk of their affections upon animals have this in common: Both require a *quid pro quo*. But whereas the woman expects and demands little beyond a display of adoration, the man expects service and demands obedience. L. V. UPWARD

A male hypochondriac appeals for sympathy as a naturally strong man overwhelmed by an absorbing complication of weaknesses: a female, as a naturally weak woman dealing heroically with a mass of afflictions even more fascinatingly complicated.

A female bore talks too much about feelings, and a male bore much too much about facts.

A woman turns her dog into an imperfect image of the child humanity has denied her; a man finds in his a companion more perfect than humanity could ever afford. F. C. C.

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